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# *The Great Seljuks*

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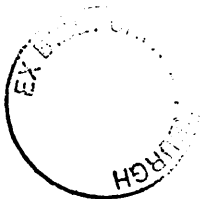
*IN TURKISH HISTORIOGRAPHY*

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

There are many problems with Turkish spellings. The silent /i/, namely /ı/, pronounced as in *-tion*, presents a challenge not overcome by /y/ or indeed /i/. Although Kyrgyz is fine for Kırgız for instance, Osmanly does not render Osmanlı. Likewise /ğ/ is a softening not a hardening of /g/, so that /gh/ as in Oghuz or yoghurt renders neither Oğuz nor yoğurt. Both /ö/ and /ü/ now seem acceptable, /ç/ as in /ch/ and /ş/ as in /sh/ are becoming more so. I have retained all six in proper Turkish nouns, so that care should be taken also with /c/, which is pronounced as /j/. Thus for instance Sancar should be read as Sanjar and Altuncan as Altunjan.

Finally, I have given Arabic and Persian names and titles minimal transliteration due to their complexity. Initial *hamzas* and *'ajyns* have been omitted, but they are indicated in the middle of words.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to present for the first time in English the corpus of Turkish scholarly writing on the Great Seljuks and to assess the internal consistency of the individual conclusions. In the West, the Great Seljuks are studied in the context of medieval Persian or Arabic history in particular and Islamic history in general [Lambton, 1987; Morgan, 1994a; Frye, 1993; Kennedy, 1994; Hodgson, 1974; Lewis, 1993]. In Turkey, the perspective that has emerged is quite different.

According to Turkish scholars, besides Biblical studies and missionary activity, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century colonialism and industrialization were the main driving forces behind the study of Islamdom. This was because Western powers had to learn the languages and religion of their subjects in order to administer them and for industrialists to sell their goods to them [Köprülü, 1940:xxviii-xxix]. The racially and religiously biased Eurocentric histories that resulted also prejudged the Turks' historical role as solely military and destructive, arguing that they had not made a single contribution that furthered civilization [*Ibid.* 149-50 & 1981:23; also Berktaş, 1983:14-5]. At the Sèvres Peace Talks, a memorandum to the Turkish delegation clearly expressed this prejudice (June 23, 1919). According to the Allies, the Turks had ravaged and destroyed the lands they had conquered in Christendom and in Islamdom, because it was not in their nature 'to develop in peace what they had won in war' [Berktaş, 1992:138-9].

It is not surprising, therefore, that Atatürk initiated the search for a historical identity outside the confines of Islamic history and the West's assertion concerning the superiority of Græco-Roman culture [Avcıoğlu, 1979/1:18-27; Afetinan, 1981:194ff]. Having said that, the roots of modern Turkish historiography must be sought in the century before Atatürk founded the Society for the Study of Turkish History (April 15, 1931).

### ***1.1 Ottoman Influences***

Reşit Pasha (1800-58), who drafted the imperial edict of November 3, 1839, the *Tanzimat-ı Hayriye Fermanı*, which proclaimed that persons of all religions would be treated equally and that the inviolability of their life, property and honour would be recognized, also founded the *Encümen-i dâniş* or Ottoman Academy (July 18, 1851). The forty members of the academy were charged with the tasks of emphasizing Turkish history rather than that of the Ottomans in an Islamic context, simplifying the Turkish language, and translating Western European works on art and science as textbooks [Berkes, 1998:144-7; Eren, IA Vol. 11:709ff; Şapolyo, 1945:161; Irmak & Çağlar, 1994:11].

The most illustrious member of the *Encümen-i dâniş* was Cevdet Pasha (1822-95). Credited with drafting the opening address to the academy, he undertook to write a history of Ottoman attempts at reform between the years 1767/8 and 1825/6. Although he included the most important events of each year in chronological order, unlike previous Ottoman chroniclers, Cevdet Pasha based his twelve-volume *Tarih-i Cevdet* on a wide variety of archival materials. He analyzed, compared and criticized in a

clear language official and private chronicles, memoirs, diaries, memorandums and reports produced by government officials, as well as legal and treasury documents. Cevdet Pasha is also credited with writing the first Turkish grammar [Berkes, 1998:178; Ölmezoglu, IA Vol. 3:114ff; Irmak & Çağlar, 1994:12-4].

Nevertheless, Ottoman historiography did not gain a Turkish emphasis until the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the innermost reaches of Asia were penetrated by Col. M. N. Przhevalski, S. Hedin, Sir A. Stein, W. Radlov (Radloff) and A. Vambéry, to mention but a few. As a result the 8<sup>th</sup> century Kök Türk Orkhun stone inscriptions were discovered in present day Mongolia and translated, as was Yusuf Has Hajib's *Kutadgu Bilig* (1069-70), a 'mirror for princes' modelled on Firdausi's *Shah-Nama*. Since J. de Guignes' work in the 18<sup>th</sup> century knowledge had been building up in western Europe that showed the Turks to have had an extensive and deeply rooted culture in Asia prior to the advent of Islam – one that was closely related to people who had remained outside Islamdom, such as the Finns, Hungarians, Mongolians and Tungus [Minorsky, IA Vol. 12/2:107ff; also Avcioğlu, 1979/1:16].

In this intellectual atmosphere, Pan-Turanism, which became synonymous with Pan-Turkism, first emerged as a political concept in Hungary (1839). Initially, the term appears to have been a romantic expression of the Hungarian intellectuals' interest in their ancestral lands and related people, very much as a reaction to Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism. According to them the Finno-Ugric and Altaic peoples had originated on the steppe between the Caspian Sea and the Altay Mountains, namely Turan [*Ibid.*]. When Ottoman intellectuals such as Necip Âsim appropriated the concept, they differentiated a Lesser Turan for the Turks and a Grand Turan inclusive of the Finns

and Hungarians. In particular Ziya Gökalp avowed that the Turks' native country were *neither Turkey nor Turkistan, but Turan: that grand and eternal place.*

There were others besides Âsım at the *Dar ül-Fünun-u Osman-i* (Ottoman Imperial University), which was first established in 1846, then in 1869, 1870-71, 1874-81 and finally once again in 1900, until replaced by the Istanbul University in 1933. For instance, according to Ahmet Vefik Pasha (1823-91) there was a difference between Turkish and Ottoman in terms of language and history [Tanpınar, IA Vol. 1:207ff; also Berkes, 1998:314]. Elsewhere, concerned that translations from European works showed Turks in a false light, Süleyman Pasha excluded them from the curriculum in military schools under his jurisdiction, and published instead the first and only volume of his *Tarih-i Âlem* (*History of the World*, 1876). More importantly, Mustafa Celâlettin Pasha, a Polish immigrant, argued in his *Les Turcs: anciens et modernes* (1869) that linguistically and racially the Europeans were related to the Turks. This is noteworthy not so much from the point of view of Pan-Turkism, but because it clearly foreshadowed the ideas that went into the *Turkish Historical Thesis*<sup>1</sup> more than half a century later [Berktaş, 1983:29; Timur, 1994:138-43; Berkes, 1998:316-7].

On the whole, however, during this period Ottoman intellectuals were concerned with the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, not Pan-Turkism. Swayed in particular by Montesquieu's ideas, the Young Ottomans (*Yeni Osmanlılar*), thought to have been founded in 1865, advocated the separation of powers through the constitution of an elected parliament to which the administration, namely the Servants of the Porte, would

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<sup>1</sup> Presented at the First Turkish Historical Congress held in Ankara in 1932, this proclaimed the Turks were not of the yellow, but a brachycephalic white race; Turkish history did not consist merely of the Ottoman; the Turks were the nation that had dispersed culture to all other nations from Central Asia [*Birinci Türk Tarih Kongresi*, 1932].

be held answerable [Berkes, 1998:208-14 & 304-13; Mardin, 1992a:31-45; Kuran, 1945]. The most influential Young Ottoman was without doubt Nâmık Kemâl (1840-88). He voiced his wide ranging ideas through various publications, both at home and abroad (*Tasvir-i Efkâr*, *Tercümân-ı Ahvâl*, *Hürriyet*, *İbret*). His opinions on constitutional monarchy, which he tried later to reconcile with Shari law [Berkes, 1998:218-22; Çavdar, 1995:30], were less than welcome. Posted to Erzurum and forbidden from publishing, he went into self-exile in Paris (1867). Although he continued to publish while abroad, on his return at first he desisted (1870). However, this did not last; public excitement over his fervently nationalistic play *Vatan yahut Silistre* (*My Country or Silistria*) caused him to be arrested and exiled (1873). Although subsequently pardoned (1876), largely due to his involvement and opposition to Sultan Abdülhamid II (1875-1909) in the drafting of the Constitution of 1876 [Berkes, 1998:223-50], he was arrested again and after five months in prison posted to the Aegean islands where he died. While in Rhodes Nâmık Kemâl started a history of the Ottoman Empire (1299-1919), which attacked the Byzantinist view of Ottoman history. This was finally published in 1908-10, some twenty years after his death [Akün, IA Vol. 9:54ff].

If Nâmık Kemâl among others thus determined the tenor of Turkish historiography, as in the case of A. Cevdet Pasha, Şemseddin Sâmî (1850-1904) continued to set the scholastic standard. Gainfully employed in the palace and decorated on several occasions by Sultan Abdülhamid II, Şemseddin Sâmî did not belong to either the Young Ottomans or their successors the Young Turks. A journalist by profession, he published educational pamphlets (*Cep Kütüphânesi* or Pocket Library) and encyclopaedic articles in various weekly magazines until his death. His main opus as an encyclopaedist was the *Kamus al-a'lam*. This was based on Bouillet's *Dictionnaire Universel d'Histoire et de Géographie*,



which he expanded considerably by adding his own articles and others from different western European sources. More specifically there are his dictionaries: the *Kamus-ı Fransevi*, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français*, *Kamus-ı Türki* and the incomplete *Kamus-ı Arabi*. As a lexicographer Şemseddin Sâmî was well aware of the differences in the Turkic language group, pointing to Central Asia for the origins of Turkish literature. He was the first to translate the Orkhun stone inscriptions and Yusuf Has Hajib's *Kutadgu Bilig* into 'contemporary' Turkish. Originally from Albania, Şemseddin Sâmî is also credited with the modern Albanian alphabet [Akün, IA Vol. 11:411ff; also Berkes, 1998:320].

Şemseddin Sâmî's influence is easily traceable. Not only the concept but also the name *Cep Kütüphanesi* continues to be used to this day. His encyclopaedia, the *Kamus al-a'lam* clearly foreshadowed the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. The *Hayat* magazine's *Büyük Türk Sözlüğü*, too, published in the 1950's, was based on *Kamus-ı Türki*. Şemseddin Sâmî took care to simplify written Turkish, thus also beginning the movement to 'cleanse' it of Persian and Arabic vocabulary and grammar, a task taken up by the now defunct Turkish Language Institute (*Türk Dil Kurumu*). Last but not least, it must be noted that although strongly criticized at the time, his method of translating word for word is still adhered to rigidly in Turkey.

Last but not least, any assessment of Ottoman influences on the development of historiography in the Republic of Turkey must include Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935), who was born in Simbirsk on the Volga River south of Kazan. His father appears to have died soon afterwards (1878). Although his mother moved to Istanbul (1883), she kept in touch with her husband's family and her own through regular visits to Kazan. One of these relations was Ismail Gasprinski, her sister's husband, who thought the Tatar community in Crimea would survive the Slav yoke only if Muslims throughout Russia

united or at least co-operated. Akçura, on the other hand, came to believe that being a Turk was more important than being a Muslim. He appears to have been affected by his father's brother, who had an extensive library and spoke several European as well as Turkic languages. During one of his visits, Akçura stayed for some time with the nomadic pastoral Başkurt, whose language and customs showed little outside influence. Later, at the Military Academy in Istanbul, Akçura avidly followed the writings of Âsim and other adherents of Pan-Turkism. Having joined the Young Turks whilst at the academy, Akçura was arrested and imprisoned (1896). The following year he was tried along with others and exiled to North Africa. Although pardoned (1898), he was not allowed to return and escaped to Paris via Tunis with some friends (1899). In Paris, he enrolled in the L'École de Science Politique and contributed to the Young Turk publication *Meşveret*, as well as the journal *Şura-yı Ümmet*, which was published in Cairo [Kara, 1976:1-18; Georgeon, 1996:15-7, 20-2 & 28].

After graduation (1903), Akçura returned to Simbirsk where he wrote the article he is best remembered for, *Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset (Three Kinds of Policy)*. The said piece, which established the theoretical basis of Turkish nationalism, was first published in Cairo in the periodical *Türk* (April-May 1904). In it Akçura argued that Pan-Islamism was impractical given the West's almost complete hegemony over Islamdom [1976:21-3 & 31-3]. On the other hand, according to Akçura, Pan-Turkism was not as yet a viable alternative either. National consciousness had remained slow to take root among Turkic people [*Ibid.* 23-4 & 33-4]. Nevertheless, his preference for the latter policy was already clear. In his university thesis he had argued that despite Chinese, Persian, Arabic, and Byzantine influences, not to mention Buddhist ones, Turkic people had retained not only their languages but also many common cultural traits. These were a patriarchal

family structure, the common ownership of land, a focusing of political power in the person of an elected ruler whose sovereignty was curtailed by customary law, an aristocratic class, a tendency for statecraft and an exceptional religious tolerance [Georgeon, 1996:29].

Soon after the restoration of the 1876 Constitution by the Young Turks (July 23, 1908), Akçura returned to Istanbul. He became an outspoken leader of the nationalist movement, but did not join the Young Turks' Society for Union and Progress [*Ibid.* 60-72]. In 1919, however, he became a founding member of the first political party to include the name Türk, namely the Milli Türk Fırkası (National Turkish Party) [Tunaya, 1952:383, 418 & 441-2]. After the occupation of Istanbul by the Allies (March 1920), Akçura left to join Atatürk and fought at Sakarya (January and March 1921). These two battles reversed the Greek invasion of western Anatolia. On the establishment of the Republic of Turkey (October 29, 1923), Akçura became a Member of Parliament for Istanbul for the Republican People's Party. In 1932 Atatürk appointed Akçura to the head the Society for the Study of Turkish History. Akçura was a founding member. As a result, that same year he chaired the First Turkish Historical Congress [Georgeon, 1996:126-8].

Despite his self-evident political appeal, however, it was the successful application of his thesis to the origins of Ottoman institutions by Köprülü (1890-1966) that has determined Akçura's defining influence on Turkish historiography [*Ibid.* 29; Berktaş,

1983:35].<sup>2</sup> As a result the cultural traits he remarked upon have become *de rigueur* among Turkish scholars.

## ***1.2 Republican Concerns***

Atatürk's concern in setting up the Society for the Study of Turkish History was to draw attention away from the Islamic Ottoman past so as to better focus Turkish patriotic feeling on its independent republic in Anatolia and eastern Thrace. But in his efforts to consolidate the Turkish nation-state Atatürk could not ignore the West's perception of the Turks' place in history.

As early as 1735 C. de Linné categorized people by their physical and moral characteristics. Accordingly, those blond and blue eyed were superior to those with yellow skin, namely the 'melancholic, mean and ruthless *Asiaticus*'. Basing his views on men of letters such as P. Belon who had travelled in the Ottoman Empire, de Linné classified the Turks in the former category. Nearly half a century later, in 1775, J. C. Lavater argued that the Turks' physiognomy showed a mixture of aristocratic Anatolian and crude Tatar blood – a downgrading to be sure. However, as indicated by his contemporary, the craniologist P. Camper, who like de Linné thought the Turks to be of the white race, scientific opinion appears to have been divided at this time. In 1839 another craniologist, S. G. Morton finally classified the Turks under the Mongols while agreeing with Lavater that they had inter-married with the Aryan and Semitic races. In

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<sup>2</sup> *Bizans Müesseselerinin Osmanlı Müesseselerine Tesiri* (*The Influence of Byzantine Institutions on Ottoman Institutions*) was published first in 1931 as an article in the *Türk Hukuk ve İktisat Tarihi Mecmuası* (*Magazine for Turkish Legal and Economic History*), of which Köprülü was chief editor.

1879, coincident with growing interest in the whereabouts of the Indo-Europeans' ancestral lands, the anthropologist G. de Mortillet claimed that the Neolithic Revolution, namely the domestication of animals and plants, was the product of a brachycephalic people. By tracing the domestication of animals he proposed that these people had originated in the Caucasus [Timur, 1994:120-5]. However, 'civilization' had already been correlated with 'race' by men of letters such as A. de Gobineau (*Essai sur l'Inégalité des Races Humaines*, 1853-55).

Another such work, Leon Cahun's *Introduction à l'Histoire de l'Asie* (1896), which was translated by Âsim, considered both the Turks and Mongols to be half-Chinese, though derisory of scientific claims to that effect. Be that as it may, in his opinion the Turks and Mongols had not progressed beyond being intermediaries between China and Persia. This was because of their self-serving greed, which had prevented them from appropriating either civilization. Given that they were 'the least able among human beings in comprehension and preferred simply to believe', by becoming Asia's Islamic representatives against a Christian Europe, from the Seljuks onward the Turks had dissipated their genius, namely the virtues of 'courage, obedience, straightforwardness, common sense' – without ever becoming aware of what they were doing [*Ibid.* 135-6; also Berkes, 1998:315].

Cahun's portrayal of the Turks as noble savages seems to have been overlooked by adherents of Pan-Turkism in favour of his attempt to demonstrate through a comparison of *Kutadgu Bilig* and the Great Seljuk Sultan Malik-Shah's vizier Nizam al-Mulk's *Siyasat-Nama* that the origins of the Turks' national character lay in Central Asia not Islamdom [*Ibid.* 137]. Given that in Cahun's view the Turks were 'decent and decisive administrators' whose 'nationhood was personified in the military' [*Ibid.* 136],

the idea of a martial élite born to rule may have seemed appealing, particularly as the Ottoman intellectuals' overriding concern remained the salvation of their imperial polity. It is clear, however, that this did not blind them to European claims of racial superiority; quite the opposite. There is good evidence that they were beginning to despair of this attitude well before the First World War [Temo, 1939:170-2; also Berkes, 1998:308 & 313-4 and Mardin, 1992a:274].

Certainly, such ideas were sufficiently widely accepted in the West to appear in French textbooks taught in Turkey during the late 1920's. Atatürk's adopted daughter Afetinan drew his attention to one such book at her school that classified the Turks as racially second-class Mongoloids. While other textbooks also referred to the Turks as an 'invasive barbaric tribe', none included their contributions to civilization [Avcioğlu, 1979/1:20; also Berktaş, 1983:51]. Already involved in how history was being taught [*Ibid.* 19], Atatürk now set to work with the express purpose of "reconstructing Turkish history on the basis of new discoveries [...that would] bring to light the works of ancient Turkish civilization" [Afetinan, 1981:194-8].

Nevertheless, that Atatürk was not satisfied with the initial drafts of the Turkish Historical Thesis presented at the First Turkish Historical Congress held in 1932 is clear [Avcioğlu, 1979/1:21-7; also Timur, 1994:144-50 & Çavdar, 1995:299-322]. Certainly, Mehmet Fuat Köprülü and Zeki Velidi Togan (1890-1970), both of whom were to gain international recognition, took the presenters of the Thesis to task at the Congress [*Birinci Türk Tarih Kongresi*, 1932:42-7, 79, 82-3, 167-176, 308-20 & 369-76].

Significantly, E. Pittard was the honorary chairman of the Second Turkish Historical Congress (1937). Having studied the Turks in the Balkans in 1911 he had come to the conclusion that their skulls were mesocephalic, a cross between brachycephalic and

dolichocephalic [T̄imur, 1994:125-6]. In a paper presented at the congress he put forward the view that the citizens of the Republic of Turkey were the inheritors of all the cultures there prior to the conquest of Anatolia and the Balkans [Avcıoğlu, 1979/1:28 & 30-1; T̄imur, 1994:147-8]. That this was also Atatürk's perception is certain [Avcıoğlu, 1979/1:27-32].<sup>3</sup>

During this period many Turkish scholars continued to build on the direction and scholarly standards established during the final century of the Ottoman Empire. Notably, Faruk Sümer, Osman Turan and Mehmet Altay Köymen, three famous scholars who specialized in Seljuk history, were Köprülü's assistants or students [Berktaş, 1983:90].

### *1.3 Why the Seljuks?*

Köprülü maintained that a nation's history could not be studied properly until set in its correct historical perspective. In his opinion, given Turkic hegemony over Islamdom during the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium, just as Islamic history can not be evaluated without an understanding of Turkic history, so medieval Turkish history can not be understood outside an Islamic context. For instance, in order to study Islamic jurisprudence it is not sufficient to understand the theory of Islamic law, one must also evaluate the origins and development of Turkic legal institutions, not to mention those of the Arabs and Iranians [Köprülü, 1940:xvii-xx].

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<sup>3</sup> "Many years ago a long since departed friend, H. H. von der Osten, an archaeologist who excavated the Hittite capital of Boghaz Köy, related how at a reception in Ankara he was congratulated by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on recovering the past of his [that is, the Turks'] ancestors. Von der Osten was about to protest, but an unseen kick by the German ambassador restricted his comment to *Yes, your excellency*." [Frye, 1996:4]

Köprülü thought that the distinguishing characteristic of a comparative methodology should be the historian's ability to disregard thousands of reported incidents that have no bearing on the historical evolution of a society, because these are either of a secondary nature or totally irrelevant [Köprülü, 1994:25]. That said, Köprülü did not approve of the selection of historical facts to justify dogmatic interpretations [*Ibid.* xxi-xxii]. Quite to the contrary, it is his open admiration of L. Febvre and hence M. Bloch, thus the historians associated with the *Annales d'Histoire Economique et Sociale* [*Ibid.* xix], which pinpoints his influences [Berktaş, 1983:84]. His insistence on the importance of social factors, that is, religious, legal and economic as well as structural characteristics, distinguished him not only from doctrinaire philosophers and political historians, but also from empiricists such as his contemporary Ömer Lütfü Barkan [*Ibid.* & 1992:109-184; see also Köprülü, 1994:24].

After extensive research on the origins and development of Turkish literature,<sup>4</sup> Köprülü addressed the question of whether or not the Ottomans had taken their institutions from the Byzantines. Western European historiography claimed that the nomadic clan, which had been situated by the Seljuks of Anatolia near the Byzantine Empire's marches and had founded the Ottoman Empire, consisted of simple shepherds. Moreover, since they had only recently accepted Islam under their chieftain Osman, they must have acquired the civilizational elements of statecraft from their non-Muslim subjects – in particular after the conquest of Constantinople [Köprülü, 1981:24-5].

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<sup>4</sup> *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihinde Usûl* was published in 1913 [1966:3-47], *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar* followed in 1918 [1993] and later there came *Türk Edebiyatı Tarihi* [also IA Vol. 12/2:530-65].



Köprülü's argument was that with the exception of *kapudan paşa* (grand admiral), which he dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Ottoman titles and institutions were derived from the Seljuks of Anatolia and hence the so-called Great Seljuks in Iran and Iraq, not Byzantium. As a result he concluded that the origins of Ottoman titles and institutions were in the main Sasanian, although he thought that some concepts were notably Turkic. Köprülü argued that the Anadolu and the Rumeli beylerbeyi, or the governors general of Anatolia and the Balkans correlated to the Turkic bipartite principle according to which polities were divided into a Right and a Left Wing. Similarly, according to Köprülü, the Ottoman concept of world dominion and the symbol of the crescent, both of which Western historians thought had been taken from the Byzantines, were essentially Turkic – although not uniquely so. The former had also been part of Abbasid ideology and the Sasanians had employed the latter. Furthermore, the drum and banner had been symbols of Kök Türk sovereignty, so that these could not have been taken from Islamdom. As for the Ottoman tımar system, in Köprülü's opinion, this was developed by the Seljuks and did not derive from the Islamic iqtā', a form of land holding (see below, 7.7.2). He argued that under the Seljuks lands and a set amount of their revenues were apportioned among the military on a hereditary basis, whereas previously the military had been paid quarterly. Last but not least, in Köprülü's estimation, the office of defterdar (minister of finance or director of provincial finances) was originally Ilkhanid.

In short, his argument was that the Abbasid Caliphate and hence the Seljuks and their successor states, namely the Khwarazmshahs, Ayyubids and Mamluks, not to mention the later Ilkhanid Empire, all had adopted and modified Sasanian and, therefore, Irano-Islamic institutions. Not surprisingly, in his subsequent work, Köprülü argued that the

origins of the Ottoman Empire must be sought in the socio-economic as well as the political evolution of various Turkic polities in Anatolia during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries [Köprülü, 1994].<sup>5</sup> However, Köprülü did not stop there. Over the next decade, in papers published in the scholarly journal *Belleten* [see Köprülü, 1938 & 1941], he further defined the themes that Turkish scholars on the Seljuks explored.

According to Köprülü, the Turks entered Islamdom with their tribal customs and laws. Although some of these changed after they established Turko-Islamic states, it was natural for many others to continue under an Islamic veneer. In his opinion, the most important of these was the Turkic leaders' tradition of lawmaking. Köprülü thought that because their empire was founded by former affiliates of the Kınık and other Oguz lineages, that is, rather than by Turkic mamluks as in the case of the Ghaznavids, the Seljuks could not command the loyalty of the Türkmen without their chieftains' fealty. As a result, at first customary rather than Shari laws prevailed among the Türkmen. But as their empire took on an Islamic character, the Seljuks allied instead with the indigenous aristocracies, who became their civil servants, and broke up the Türkmen by settling them on the marches or on smaller, individual or clan iqta's, that is, rather than situating them on large tribal ones. In Köprülü's opinion, this policy was supported by the autocratic traditions of the Great Seljuks' viziers, namely Kunduri and Nizam al-Mulk. Although he thought that it was only partially successful, according to Köprülü, the policy succeeded in strengthening central government, because it lessened the influence that the Türkmen chieftains could wield over the Seljuks, whom they regarded as first among equals (*primus inter pares*) [Berktaş, 1983:68-73].

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<sup>5</sup> The argument was put forward at three lectures at the Sorbonne in Paris, in 1934, and first published the following year in French under the title of *Les Origines de l'Empire Ottoman*.

In challenging Western historical conceptions of the Ottoman Empire, therefore, Köprülü not only directed Turkish scholars to the study of Seljuk history, but, as this thesis will demonstrate, also established a framework from which Turkish historians have rarely strayed.

#### **1.4 Sources**

The first Turkish history of the Seljuks was Mükremin Halil Yınanç's *Selçuklular Devri Türkiye Tarihi* (*The Seljukid Period of Turkey's History*), which was published immediately after the Second World War. According to Yınanç, he was not able to gain access to all the relevant documents since some of these were in Europe. The documents he did have access to, however, are neither discussed nor referenced in a clear and systematic fashion by him. There is a general list of primary sources in the introduction to his book and more specific lists at the end of each chapter, so that it is difficult to ascertain which primary or secondary sources he used to arrive at his conclusions. Although the aim of this thesis does not include evaluation of the Turkish scholars' use of sources concerning the Seljuks, for these reasons Yınanç's history has not been referenced except where other Turkish scholars have done so.

Zeki Velidi Togan (1890-1972) did not write a history of the Seljuks, but he did refer to them in his *Umumi Türk Tarihi'ne Giriş* (*Introduction to the General History of the Turks*) and *Oğuz Destanı – Reşideddin Oğuznâmesi, Tercüme ve Tahlili* (*The Oğuz Epic – Translation and Analysis of Rashid al-Din's Oğuz-Nama*). A protégé of Sir Aurel Stein, Togan was a Başkurt who had studied at Kazan University and had done research work at the Petersburg Academy before the First World War. Politically active, he was instrumental

in establishing the Başkurt army, which sided with the Bolsheviks. For a time Togan was also a member of the Committee of Six, which included Lenin, Stalin and Trotsky, but as a leader of the Başkurt independence movement he later came into conflict with the Bolsheviks and fled to Turkey (1924) [Togan, 1969]. There he became an advisor to the Ministry of Education and then Professor of Turkish at Istanbul University. When asked to teach the Turkish Historical Thesis he resigned and went to Vienna where he studied Medieval History under Professor Dopsch. He gained his doctoral degree with a thesis on the Arabic text of Ibn Fadlan's journey to the Urals in a manuscript he had discovered in Mehshed [Koestler, 1976:212-3]. Togan returned to Turkey a year after the Second Turkish Historical Congress (1937) and was appointed Professor of Medieval Turkish History at Istanbul University.

Since the historical framework that he proposed in *Umumi Türk Tarihi'ne Giriş* was based on an internationally acclaimed standard of scholarship, Turkish scholars could not ignore his views on the Seljuks. Togan argued that the Mongols not only unified Turkic people but also enabled them to become established in the Middle East [1946:182ff], a view with which Sümer agreed [1965:7]. Togan also argued that without a further Turkic influx under the Mongols, the Türkmén could have become assimilated by the Iranians and the Greeks [1946:206-22]. Togan extended his analysis to include the Ottomans. Accordingly, it was Timur's defeat of Sultan Bayezid I that enabled the consolidation of the Ottoman Empire. Otherwise, the Türkmén could have become spread thin across the Middle East, the Balkans, and possibly also Italy [*Ibid.* 347-50], a point with which Turan by and large agreed [1971]. Togan's argument that Selçuk Beg was the descendant of a tent pole sharpener, however, was strongly challenged by Kafesoğlu in his *Selçuklu Ailesinin Menşei Hakkında (On the Origins of the Seljuk Family)*.

İbrahim Kafesoğlu (1914-84) was not only familiar with Islamic sources on the Seljuks, but also western European, Hungarian and Russian research on Inner Asia. A scholarship student from Anatolia, he studied initially with A. Alföldi, Gy. Németh and L. Ràsonyi, then Yınanç, who interested him in the Seljuks, and finally with Togan, being appointed to the latter's chair at Istanbul University upon his death. In view of his strong interest in Turkic history it is not surprising that Kafesoğlu also maintained that Seljuk and Ottoman history can not be understood without reference to the Turks' own cultural past. Apart from *Selçuklu Ailesinin Menşei Hakkında*, he also wrote a review of Seljuk history and culture in the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, which has been translated recently into English by G. Leiser as *A History of the Seljuks*, as well as *Sultan Melikşah Devrinde Büyük Selçuklu İmparatorluğu* (*The Great Seljuk Empire at the Time of Sultan Malik-Shah*) and *Harezmşahlar Devleti Tarihi* (*History of the Khwarazmshah State*).

Osman Turan (1914-78), who was Köprülü's student and assistant, is remembered best for his history of the Seljuks in Anatolia, *Selçuklular Zamanında Türkiye* (*Turkey at the Time of the Seljuks*) and *Doğu Anadolu Türk Devletleri Tarihi* (*History of the Turkish States in Eastern Anatolia*). He also wrote an overview of Seljuk civilization, namely *Selçuklular Tarihi ve Türk-İslâm Medeniyeti* (*Seljuk History and Turko-Islamic Civilization*), not to mention others such as *Selçuklular ve İslâmiyet* (*The Seljuks and Islam*) and *Türk Cihân Hâkimiyeti Mefkûresi Tarihi* (*History of the Turkic Concept of World Dominion*). These latter works have cast a shadow over his earlier scholarship, in part due to his stormy academic and political career. Having entered Parliament as a member of the Democrat Party in 1954, Turan was imprisoned for 18 months as a result of the *coup d'état* of May 27, 1960. He was tried along with others such as his mentor Köprülü and cleared of violating the constitution. Turan was expelled from the Turkish Historical Institute for writing a

series of articles ostensibly criticizing Atatürk's reforms. When he left politics, he was refused a university posting. It was his *Selçuklular Tarihi ve Türk-İslâm Medeniyeti*, however, which caused the greatest controversy. This book-length review of the Seljuks' history was rejected by the editorial board of the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, in the main for administrative reasons, favouring Kafesoğlu's much shorter article. When this latter was published in 1964-5, however, Turan accused Kafesoğlu of plagiarism in the scholarly journal *Belleten*.

Whatever the truth of the matter [Akpınar, 1993:46; also Leiser, 1988], both Turan and Kafesoğlu have been accused of allowing xenophobia to influence their work [*Ibid.* 47-9; also Humphreys, 1991:166]. Turan was sweeping in many of his conclusions, which were couched in language that invariably exalted the Seljuks' deeds as heroic. Apart from an occasional use of emotive language, however, Kafesoğlu can not be accused of having allowed his judgement as a historian to be influenced by patriotic concerns [see Akpınar, 1993:43 & 46-9 for Strohmeier, 1984:151-97]; quite the reverse. Most of the views for which in particular Akpınar criticized him are becoming part of the current consensus. In any case, it is useful to compare Kafesoğlu's sentiment on 'Turkish spiritual and moral strength' with, for instance, René Grousset's view, which in today's cultural climate seems racist. According to Kafesoğlu [1994:54]: *Even if the result of necessity, to flow towards unknown horizons, to be ready to breast at any moment the evident dangers and to live in a constant life-and-death struggle is not a behaviour that can be regarded as natural for every nation.* According to Grousset [1997:xxx]: *Governing races, imperial nations, are few. The Turko-Mongols, like the Romans, are of their number.*

Mehmet Altay Köymen (1915-1993), who was also Köprülü's student, concerned himself solely with the history of the Seljuks in Khurasan and Iraq, the so-called Great

Seljuks. Although not as ambitious in its scope, his *Selçuklu Devri Türk Tarihi* (*The Seljukid Period of Turkish History*) is the better summary when compared to either Kafesoğlu's article in the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi* or Turan's *Selçuklular Tarihi ve Türk-İslâm Medeniyeti*. Only the first and last volumes of his proposed five-volume history of the Great Seljuks, namely *Büyük Selçuklu İmparatorluğu Tarihi* (*History of the Great Seljuk Empire*) were published. According to Köymen, his books *Tuğrul Bey ve Zamanı* (*Tuğrul Beg and His Time*), *Alp Arslan ve Zamanı* (*Alp-Arslan and His Time*) and associated articles in the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, the Ankara University DTCF's *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* (*Journal of Historical Research*) and the *Selçuklu Araştırmaları Dergisi* (*Journal of Seljukid Research*) were to provide the basis for his proposed second and third volumes. Likewise, although according to Köymen it required revision and expansion in light of new material, Kafesoğlu's *Sultan Melikşah Devrinde Büyük Selçuklu İmparatorluğu* was to provide the basis for the fourth volume. The problem with this framework is that the proposed series did not include the reigns of Sultan Berk-Yaruk and Sultan Tapar. Like Kafesoğlu and Turan, Köymen was well aware of European scholarship and made references to relevant studies in his work, such as C. E. Bosworth, J. A. Boyle, C. Cahen, G. Makdisi, O. Franke, A. K. S. Lambton, B. Lewis, H. Töllner, etc.

Faruk Sümer (1924-95) wrote *Oğuzlar (Türkmenler) – Tarihleri, Boy Teşkilatı, Destanları* (*The Oğuz (Türkmen) – History, Organization, Epics*), *Yabanlu Pazarı – Selçuklular Devrinde Milletlerarası Büyük Bir Fuar* (*Foreigners' Market – A Large International Fair During the Seljuk Period*) and *Selçuklular Devrinde Doğu Anadolu'da Türk Beylikleri* (*The Turkish Beyliks in Eastern Anatolia During the Seljuk Period*), as well as numerous articles in both the *İslâm*

*Ansiklopedisi*,<sup>6</sup> various Turkish periodicals and the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Although his magnum opus, *Oğuzlar*, reads as if it is an amalgamation of lecture notes, it is well worth the effort despite its brevity on the Seljuks, particularly as Sümer excludes and sometimes criticizes material incorporated by his contemporaries, namely Yınanç, Kafesoğlu, Turan and Köymen.

There is also Ali Sevim, who has written several studies of the Seljuks in Syria and Palestine, the most notable being *Suriye-Filistin Selçuklu Devleti Tarihi* (*The History of the Seljuks of Syria and Palestine*). His reviews of the Türkmen chieftains' raids into Anatolia under the Seljuks' direction, *Ünlü Selçuklu Komutanları – Afşin, Atsız, Artuk ve Aksungur* (*Famous Seljuk Commanders – Afşin, Atsız, Artuk and Aksungur*), and of Süleyman-Shah, *Anadolu Fatihî Kutalmışoğlu Süleymanşah* (*The Conqueror of Anatolia, Süleyman-Shah*), however, are comparatively lightweight, as is his *Selçuklu-Ermeni İlişkileri* (*Seljuk-Armenian Relations*).

All the above mentioned works are now quite dated. Kafesoğlu wrote his work on Khwarazmshahs and the Seljuks in the first half of the 1950's, his article on the Seljuks in the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi* being published in 1965. Turan published all his work on the Seljuks between 1965 and 1971. Köymen, on the other hand, published his work on the Seljuks in a steady stream over four decades, from the 1950's into the 1980's. Nevertheless, all but one of his major works on the Seljuks was published in the 1970's.

The new generation of historians who have published in recent years have not reassessed the research done by any of the above-mentioned historians, seemingly

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<sup>6</sup> The first is a translation, revision and expansion of the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* commissioned by the Ministry of Education. The second is a separate and as yet incomplete series commissioned by the Pious Foundation for Religious Affairs.



taking care to write histories of the Seljuks not covered by them. There are Abdülkerim Özeydin's *Sultan Berkyaruk Devri Selçuklu Tarihi (485-498/1092-1104) (Seljuk History During the Reign of Sultan Berkyaruk)* and *Sultan Muhammed Tapar Devri Selçuklu Tarihi (498-511/1105-1118) (Seljuk History During the Reign of Sultan Muhammed Tapar)*. Also noteworthy is Erdoğan Merçil's *Kirman Selçukluları (Seljuks of Kirman)*, not to mention Ahmet Yaşar Ocak's study of the *Babai* uprising and still others on specific aspects of Seljuk art and society in Anatolia.

Mention must be made also of Doğan Avcıoğlu's five volume evaluation of Turkish history up to the Ottoman Empire, *Türklerin Tarihi (The History of the Turks)*, as from the latter part of the third volume the work concerns itself solely with the Seljuks. Having on his own admission taken a Marxist approach, however, Avcıoğlu arguably became embroiled in ascertaining whether or not nomadic pastoral cultures and Islamdom were 'feudal', not to mention the applicability of Karl Marx's Asiatic Mode of Production. Unlike Gordlevski (*Gosudarstvo Selçukidov Maloy Azii*, translated into Turkish as *Anadolu Selçuklu Devleti* or *The Anatolian Seljuk State*), Avcıoğlu based his conclusions only in part on primary sources. Since his use of secondary sources is also highly selective, the work at best airs certain questions of political history at issue between Turkish intellectuals in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Last but not least, some reference has been made to Western scholarship other than that found in the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. For instance, Barthold, Grousset and Cahen's major works are not only available in Turkish, but are also widely used by Turkish scholars alongside articles in the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. Having said that, it must be pointed out that because for a time he worked in Turkey, the Sinologist D. W. Eberhard published most of his books in Turkish first and, therefore, is regarded here as belonging also to

Turkish historiography. Eberhard has been referenced in the context of Inner Asian history.

### ***1.5 Methodology***

As noted with regard to Yinanç, the aim of this thesis does not include the evaluation of the Turkish scholars' use of primary sources concerning the Seljuks. As well as providing detailed footnotes, almost without exception Turkish scholars discussed their use of sources in their books. As an example, Köymen's evaluation of primary sources on the Seljuks is given in APPENDIX 3. In Chapters 3-6, namely CONQUEST, EMPIRE, INTERREGNUM and DISSOLUTION, the Turkish historians' works on the Great Seljuks are reviewed and their views summarised. APPENDIX 1 contains maps relevant to the text and APPENDIX 2 charts the genealogy of the Oguz and the Seljuks. There is a comprehensive BIBLIOGRAPHY at the end.

Chapter 2, ORIGINS, offers a brief summary of steppe culture in light of modern scholarship, because of the importance Togan, Kafesoğlu and Turan attached to it as an influence on the Seljuks. The chapter also analyses in some detail the tribal origins of the Oguz, from whom the Seljuks and possibly many of the Türkmen stemmed. The reason behind this analysis is the source of the Seljuks' and their Türkmen affiliates' ideology and cultural expectations, which is taken up at length in Chapter 7, EVALUATION.

Chapter 3, CONQUEST, begins with the Seljuks' and their Türkmen affiliates' exploits before they became established in Khurasan, at the expense of the Ghaznavids. The chapter concentrates on the Seljuks' conquest of Khurasan and the struggles between

various members, inclusive of the Türkmen raids launched from Azarbayjan into Anatolia under the Seljuks' leadership.

Chapter 4, EMPIRE, covers the reigns of sultans Alp-Arslan and Malik-Shah, under whom the Seljuks were united into an empire that expanded into Anatolia, Transoxania, Syria and Palestine.

The internecine struggle between the Seljuks on Sultan Malik-Shah's sudden death, which coincided with the arrival of the Crusaders and the rise of the Isma'ilis, is covered in the Chapter 5, INTERREGNUM.

Chapter 6, DISSOLUTION, covers the reigns of sultans Tapar and Sancar, during which the Great Seljuk Empire reverted to bipartite Turkic rule, before being fatally weakened by Kara Khitay and finally destroyed by the Oguz.

In Chapter 7, EVALUATION, the basis on which Turkish scholars view the Great Seljuks as the beginning of Turko-Islamic civilization is analysed. Since they are disagreed on what was Turkic in the Great Seljuk Empire, fresh interpretations are proposed for the issues raised by them, such as the 'Türkmen problem' and questions concerning succession, legitimacy and dominion. The proposed reinterpretations are based on a full discussion of primary sources on Turkic ideology and culture, with some reference to modern anthropological studies on nomadic pastoralism.

Perhaps the most comprehensive review is A. M. Khazanov's *Nomads and the Outside World*. This is because it draws not only on anthropological research but also on the historical record, as well as other disciplines such as archaeology and climatology. There are more general anthropological works, too, such as M. Gluckman's *Politics Law and Ritual in Tribal Society* or R. Fox's *Kinship and Marriage*, not to mention field studies such

as E. E. Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer* and Fredrik Barth's *Nomads of South Persia*. Along with specific papers such as Marshall D. Sahlins' *The Segmentary Lineage: An Organization of Predatory Expansion*, these works shed much light on the nature and enduring concerns of pastoralism.

Mention should be made also of more modern studies of steppe empires. In the main influenced by Owen Lattimore's *Inner Asian Frontiers of China* rather than works such as Grousset's *The Empire of the Steppes*, these incorporate social and economic considerations as well as geographical factors in making historical assessments. T. J. Barfield's *The Perilous Frontier* and S. Jagchid & V. J. Symons' *Peace, War, and Trade along the Great Wall* are two such works that spring to mind.

None of these specifically addresses the question of ideology. This may be defined as a political expression of socio-economic institutions, which are determined by a culture's technological basis. However, any assessment of development must include geographical and demographic factors as independent determinants alongside that of cultural interaction. Even if invention requires genius, it is invariably driven by necessity. Arguably this releases discussion of culture change from being conducted in terms of historical cycles or equally arbitrary scales of progress. In this perspective emphasis falls on acculturation not diffusion, that is, *why*, *when* and *how* something was incorporated, not solely *what* by *whom*. The advantage of this is that the question of cultural historicity no longer clouds the answers to *where*.

Apart from Owen Lattimore's *Inner Asian Frontiers of China*, my definition of ideology is derived from works such as Marshall D. Sahlins and E. R. Service's *Culture and Evolution*, Julian H. Steward's *Theory of Culture Change – The Methodology of Multilinear Evolution*, R. G. Wilkinson's *Poverty and Progress*, Milton H. Fried's *The Evolution of Political Society*, H. J.

M. Claessen and P. Skalník's *The Study of the State* and Marvin Harris' *Cannibals and Kings: The Origins of Cultures*, not to mention K. A. Wittfogel's *Oriental Despotism*.

### ***1.6 Acknowledgements***

I would like to thank Prof. Carole Hillenbrand for her invaluable guidance during the preparation of this thesis.

There are others I must also thank, as without their help I could not have accessed all the relevant sources. First and foremost I would like to thank Mustafa Özdemir of the Librarie de Pera, in Istanbul, who found and delivered all the books by Turkish scholars for the period in question. Secondly, there is my childhood friend Mustafa Bozcaadalı, who got me copies of Köymen's articles, and also my good friend Cem Kum, who referred me to relevant works by military historians. Thirdly, there is my colleague Cengiz Tomar, who drew my attention to pertinent articles and theses.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my wife, Maureen, not only for her encouragement, but also for tirelessly querying the text for clarity.

## 2. ORIGINS

As in the case of Togan, Kafesoğlu's original interest in Turkic culture clearly influenced his evaluation of Seljuk history. Given that this was also true for Turan, problems concerning the history of nomadic pastoral people across Eurasia need to be put into perspective, particularly with regard to the origins and ancestry of the Oguz. Map A1.1 in Appendix 1 attempts to chart the migrations mentioned in the following section.

### *2.1 Steppe Culture*

The Eurasian steppes are interrupted by a complex of mountains, namely the Pamir, T'ien-Shan (Tengri or Ak-Tağ), Targabatay, Altay (Altun-Yış), Tannu-Ula (Kögmen), Hangay (Ötüken-Yış) and Sayan (Kögmen) Mountains. The grasslands are higher and hence drier eastward toward Manchuria, while lush pastures abound westward into Eastern Europe. This is why to the east horses and sheep appear to have predominated, whereas to the west initially cattle were favoured alongside sheep, with horses being kept as in draught animals. Since the steppes to the west also favoured agriculture, agrarian and urban concerns remained to the fore, a point that is confirmed by Turkic loan words in Hungarian [Kafesoğlu, 1994:165; also Ràsonyi, 1983:10].<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, it

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<sup>7</sup> Arpa (barley), buza = buğday (wheat), tarló = tarla (field), alma (apple), szőlő = szőlő (grape), tyuk = tavuk (chicken), kos = koç (ram), bika = buka or buğa (bull), ökör = öküz (cattle), etc.

seems clear that agriculture was practised also in Inner Asia [Ögel, 1962:88-90 & 164-5; also Barfield, 1989:45-9]. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that migration routes were fixed, regardless of distances. Tombs and fortifications discovered by archaeologists indicate that even in Inner Asia pastoralists had seasonal residences [Esin, 1980a:4-5], most of which were doubtless winter quarters.

Having begun to dry during the previous millennium, the Eurasian steppes are thought to have been at their driest around 800 BCE [Lamb, 1995; also Khazanov, 1994], which is when the Scythians entered the historical record. Although thereafter fully nomadic pastoralists periodically irrupted on the steppes west of the Altay, whether or not such appearances were likewise due to drought must be a secondary consideration. Arguably it was the development and spread of agriculture throughout northern China that forced full blown pastoralism to emerge in Inner Asia among those cultures whose herders were driven to the margins [Ögel, 1962; Esin, 1980a; Eberhard, 1987; also Lattimore, 1967]. Having spread to forest people, pastoralism nevertheless remained dependent on agriculture and manufacture [Lattimore, 1967; Khazanov, 1994], and hence trade [Jagchid & Symons, 1989; also Kafesoğlu, 1956]. Although herders appear to remain healthier than farmers do [Barth, 1986; also Khazanov, 1994], unlike agriculture, pastoralism has never provided the means of intensifying food production to absorb population growth – at least not to a comparable magnitude. Thus, for instance, it can not be known at present whether the Western Huns, who evidently also practised agriculture [Maenchen-Helfen, 1973:174-8], were displaced by an expansion of predominantly agrarian culture(s) in the Pontic-Caspian region or by the collapse in Inner Asia of the Hsiung-nu Empire (210 BCE – 155 CE). What is certain is that even

when nomadic pastoralists were united into empires, sedentary people outnumbered them by as much as 100:1 [Divitçioğlu, 1987:210].<sup>8</sup>

For nearly three thousand years people from Central and Inner Asia migrated across the Eurasian steppe zone, sowing fear wherever they appeared. Not that anyone could determine how many made up a 'horde' [Roux, 1995:80ff], or who. A clan's ancestry was secondary to the lineage to which it was politically affiliated at the time [Evans-Pritchard, 1978; Sahlins, 1968; Fox, 1967]. Moreover, marriage alliances were as much between people of different ethnic and linguistic origins as between dynasties [Türköne, 1995; Togan, 1946; Esin, 1980a; Ögel, 1962; also Fox, 1967], further complicating the latter day search for the ethnic origins [Togan, 1946; Esin, 1980a; also Golden, 1992]. Consequently, nomadic pastoralism is currently thought to have been inclusive not exclusive [Barfield, 1993; Sahlins, 1968; Fox, 1967; Leach, 1977], its hierarchical organization making it indigenously capable of statecraft [Barfield, 1993 & 1989]. This is what Turkish scholars have been arguing [Togan, 1946; Kafesoğlu, 1994; Köymen, 1979].

Recent research likewise concurs with Turkish scholars that statecraft rather than written records is the differentiating characteristic between primitive and advanced cultures [Sahlins, 1968; Sahlins & Service, 1973; Claessen & Skalník, 1981]. Arguably it is the organization and distribution of an agricultural surplus that necessitated writing,

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<sup>8</sup> According to Tonyukuk, Bilge Kagan's Chief Counsellor and Commander-in-Chief, the Kök Türk made up less than 1% of the T'ang period Chinese [Divitçioğlu, 1987:210]. Given that Tonyukuk was born in China and before helping to rejuvenate the Kök Türk Empire was also in hereditary service in the Chinese administration [Tekin, 1994:2], this percentage has to be taken seriously. Based on a census conducted in 2 CE, the Chinese are thought to have totalled 12.3 million hearths, or 58.5 million people [McNeill, 1989:119]. Using the same multiplier for arithmetic consistency, by 703 CE the total number of hearths would have fallen to 6.9 million, thus 32.8 million people, rising by 742 CE to 8.6 million hearths or 40.9 million people [see Elvin, 1973:206]. Accordingly, less than 1% would make at the most 300,000 people, as by 716 CE Tonyukuk already was 70 years of age.



reading, and arithmetic [Lattimore, 1967; Wittfogel, 1959]. A nomadic pastoral way of life did not, except when the leaders of such polities needed to communicate with or administer sedentary empires. According to the Chinese the Hsiung-nu did not have a script [Eberhard, 1942:76], which may explain why a few tantalising lines of Hsiung-nu poetry thought to be in Turkic were rendered in Chinese characters [Tekin, 1993]. Certainly, in their written communications with the Chinese, the Hsiung-nu used the latter's language [Barfield, 1989:52-3], as did the Kök Türk, who also used Soghdian in Transoxania [Divitçioğlu, 1987]. While the Great Seljuks and their military spoke Turkic among themselves, they administered their subjects in Persian [Kafesoğlu, 1994 & IA Vol. 10:353ff]. Similarly, although the Mongols adopted the Uygur version of the Soghdian cuneiform script, they administered their empire(s) in local languages.

Not surprisingly, the further one goes back, the less chance of finding records left by nomadic pastoral people. As Togan pointed out [1946:26; see Herodotus, 1992:304-5], the Royal Scythians had seven interpreters who spoke seven languages to communicate with the different people situated as far east as the flat-nosed, bald Argippæans by their lofty mountains. Nevertheless, the recent discovery of a tomb in Central Asia suggests that an archaic version of the runiform script used by the Kök Türk existed as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Two of the letters have been found only in the Kök Türk alphabet, which is thought to have evolved from Türk clan seals (*tamga*). At present scholars appear agreed that at least one of the words inscribed on a silver cup found in the said tomb is Turkic, namely *azuk* (food prepared for a journey) [Esin, 1980a:1 & 22-4; also Kafesoğlu, 1994:323].

## 2.2 The Oguz

*Uz*, *Guz* and *Gur*, not to mention *Guz* and also *Gurr*, all come up repeatedly in the works of Muslim and other chroniclers and geographers with reference to the Oguz, the Ogur and the Uygur, Turkic polities that not only knew each other but also intermingled. Turkic nomenclature further complicates the problem of ascertaining their whereabouts at any specific time.

The root for Oguz and Ogur appears to have been *og-* or *ogu-*, as in the Argu *ogla* for youth or hero [Atalay, 1992/I:129], or *ogul* for son [*Ibid.* 51, etc.]. *Ogul* initially meant human child [Arat, IA Vol. 9:376-8], so that *urı oglan* was a male child [*Ibid.*; also Atalay, 1992/I:88 & 251] and *kız oglan* a female child [*Ibid.*]. Appropriately, *ogulçuk* was womb [Atalay, 1992/I:149]. *Oguş* meant family, or more correctly kin as in clan or relative [*Ibid.* 61 & 88 and II:83 & 103]. Consequently, *Og-* or better still *Ogu-* and the collective suffix *-z* or *-r* are thought to mean *the clans* [Sümer, 1965:13-4; Kafesoğlu, 1994:141-2; Divitçioğlu, 1994:11]. The collective suffix *-z* originated east of the Altay while *-r* prevailed westward [Kafesoğlu, 1994:51 & 185-6; Yüce, IA Vol. 12/2:445ff; Bozkurt, 1992]. Interestingly enough, one meaning of *ogur* was to split a bone and separate its parts, and another felicity/statecraft [Atalay, 1992/I:53].<sup>9</sup> Similarly, *ok* or arrow denoted a share of an inheritance [*Ibid.* I:37 & 48], possibly as a variation of *og-*. The Orkhun stone inscriptions refer to the Western Kök Türk as the On Ok [Tekin, 1988:13, etc.]. Chinese annals mention that the Kök Türk kagan resident in the East presented the

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<sup>9</sup> Admittedly, due to a lack of firm evidence too much can be made of etymology throughout Eurasian pre-history. However, the Turko-Mongolian differentiation between those descended from the White and Black Bone, namely *Ak* and *Kara Kamag Budun* is clearly valid [Sümer, 1965; Kafesoğlu, 1994], as is the connection between felicity and statecraft [Atalay, 1992/I:92, 301, 304, 320 & 508 and II:229].

leader of each ruling lineage in the West with an arrow [Sümer, 1965:20], which is interpreted to denote that they were subordinate [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 12/2:219].

Chinese annals refer to the Ogur, but not the Oguz. Initially mentioned between the Sayan and T'ien-shan Mountains in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE, the Ogur seem to have spread westward as far as the Urals by the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE [Kafesoğlu, 1994:185-7]. As for the Oguz, they and the Kıpçak are thought to have been the Wu-huan that Chinese annals mention immediately east of the Altay, between the Tannu-ola and Hangay Mountains [Esin, 1980a:7]. The earliest known reference to the Oguz, to be more precise the Altı (Six) Oguz under a certain Öz Yigen Alp Turan, is on the Yenisei stone inscriptions dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries [Sümer, IA Vol. 9:378]. The Yenisei River flows north from the Tannu-ola Mountains. The Oguz are next referred to on the 8<sup>th</sup> century Orkhun stone inscriptions; the Tokuz Oguz are mentioned on the Tonyukuk inscription [Tekin, 1994:4 & 5] and the Üç (Three) Oguz on the Bilge Kagan inscription (735) [Tekin, 1988:49]. As is clear from these inscriptions [*Ibid.* 13, 45 & 1994:6], at the time the Tokuz Oguz were situated in present day Mongolia. This is where Kutlug or Ilteriş Kagan (682-91) re-established the Kök Türk Empire by defeating their newly appointed Baz<sup>10</sup> Kagan [Sümer, 1965:16; see Tekin, 1994:5]. Prior to this defeat, the Tokuz Oguz were allied with the Otuz (Thirty) Tatar and the Chinese, going so far as to migrate to northern China [Tekin, 1988:51], where some are thought to have stayed. However, archaeological evidence suggests that some of the Oguz migrated from Inner Asia, reaching the region between Lakes Balkash and Issyk-Köl during the 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries [Esin, 1980a].

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<sup>10</sup> *Baz* could mean stranger [Atalay, 1992/III:148 & 159], or subjugated [Divitçioğlu, 1987:184], but in this context most likely denoted the species of the goshawk, an Oguz avian emblem [Esin, 1994:202].

The Oguz migration to Central Asia may explain the reference to the On Ok's successors, the Türgiř [Tekin, 1988:13, 19, 23, 33, 43 & 47], who, according to the Orkhun stone inscriptions, were represented at Bilge Kagan's funeral (731) by a *Makaraç tamgaçı* and an *Oguç Bilge tamgaçı* [*Ibid.* 23]. Possibly *Makaraç* is a title derived from *maharac* (more commonly *maharaja*) [*Ibid.* 153]. *Bilge* means knowledgeable/wise, while *tamga* is seal [Atalay, 1992/IV:92, 567]. On the other hand, of the six lineages that made up the Türgiř, who were originally on the Left Wing of the On Ok, four were headed by patriarchs with the title of Çor, which may indicate that they were of the Şul (from Çöl or desert, and hence Çor [Esin, 1980a:62-3]). The Şul are thought to have been in Jurjan, south-east of the Caspian Sea, from at least as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> century [*Ibid.*]. As far as the Kök Türk's great kagan was concerned, it seems that the Türgiř were the senior members of the Left Wing of the On Ok.

The Right Wing of the On Ok, the Nu-she-pi, appear to have consisted of three lineages, namely the A-si-kie, the Ko-shu (the Ezkiř or Ezgiř) and the Pay-say-kan. These are thought to have become the Üç (Three) Ok of the Oguz, which included the Kınık. Once again, however, there is a link to Inner Asia. The regent of the 10<sup>th</sup> century Oguz polity between the Caspian and Aral Seas was called Kül Erkin (also Kuzerkin), the title of the senior rulers of the A-si-kie and Ko-shu. The Karluk, at the time situated from the northern slopes of the Pamir and central T'ien-shan Mountains toward the Irtysh River, also called their regent Kül Erkin [Sümer, 1965:21, 33 & 35-7; Togan, 1982:137; Kafesoğlu, 1994:137 & IA Vol. 12/2:165; Divitçioğlu, 1992:130; Şeřen, 1975:37].

The question of whether or not the Oguz were related to their namesakes in Inner Asia is confused further by the origins of the Uygur, who as the On (Ten) Uygur seem to

have been well known to the Khazar, namely nine Oguz and one Uygur. *Uy-* meant to go along, to ally [Atalay, 1992/III:146], and *uya-* relative/brother [*Ibid.* I:85]. Accordingly, *Uy+(o)gur* (Uygur) would be allied/related/brotherly clans [Kafesoğlu, 1994:122; Bozkurt, 1992:66]. The *-r* suffix suggests an origin to the west of the Eurasian mountain-complex, which appears to be confirmed by Chinese sources that mention them in the Ili River valley north of Issyk-Köl (50-43 BCE) [Esin, 1980a:204]. The Uygur re-emerge in present day Mongolia during the initial collapse of the Kök Türk Empire. Having been recognized by the Chinese court (646), they seem to have reinforced their independence of the Kök Türk by helping defeat remnants of the On Ok (657), advancing as far as Tashkent. Around this time some of the Tokuz Oguz already appear affiliated to the Uygur [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol.12/2:180]. Along with the nine Uygur clans, the Buku, Bayırku, Siker, K'i-pi, Ediz and Izgil (or Sse-ki [Divitçioğlu, 1994:11]), the Toñra and Kunı are thought to have made up the Tokuz Oguz [Divitçioğlu, 1987; Sümer, 1965:33]. Of these the Izgil are named on the Orkhun stone inscriptions as having been dispersed by Kül Tekin [Tekin, 1988:21]. Thus the Esgil/Isgil mentioned in association with the Bulgar polity established on the Volga during the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries may possibly be the Izgil.

There is also the final collapse of the Kök Türk Empire and the ensuing struggle to consider (744-55). This may have given impetus to the westward migration mentioned above and explain an unconfirmed reference to the Oguz in conjunction with al-Muqanna's (c.776-83) revolt against the caliphate in Transoxania [Kafesoğlu, 1994:143; Divitçioğlu, 1994:13-4]. Although during this struggle the Basmıl's leader Iduk Kutu, a relation of the imperial Kök Türk A-shih-na clan [Tekin, 1988:47], had declared himself kagan upon defeating the Kök Türk Tengri Kagan's successor, their allies, the Uygur

and Karluk, did not accept this. The Basml were beaten, never to recover. The Uygur next defeated the Üç Karluk, consolidating their ascendancy. The Karluk (most likely the Çiğil and Yağma lineages) migrated south-west from between Lake Zaysan and Lake Ulungur, where the current borders of Kazakhstan, China, Mongolia and Russia meet in the Altay, displacing the Peçenek toward the Caspian Lowlands [Sümer, 1965:28ff; Divitçioğlu, 1992:131].

Peçenek derives from Becenek (currently bacanak), meaning brother-in-law, but in the context of men who have married sisters. They are thought to have been initially of the Left Wing of the On Ok because two of the eight Peçenek lineages were called Çor and Çoban (Çopan), which were the titles of the Left Wing chiefs of the On Ok other than the Türgiş [Sümer, 1965:21 & 44]. Thus the Peçenek recorded as a lineage of the Üç Ok Oguz [*Ibid.* 169-71; also Atalay, 1992/I:57], are thought to be a branch of the main body subsequently driven from between the Ural and Volga rivers by the Khazar and the Oguz in 898-902 [*Ibid.* 45]. Although there is an 8<sup>th</sup> century reference to a Ba-cha-neg affiliation northeast of the Orkhun River, noted as having been at war with the Uygur, these may have been a branch that migrated eastward rather than westward.

Consequently, as Sümer proposed [1965:21, 33 & 35-7], most likely the Oguz of the 10<sup>th</sup> century were Turkic people of western Eurasian origin with whom in time other Turkic people from Inner Asia became affiliated. The senior lineage of the Üç Ok Oguz, the Bayandır, for instance, whose name stems from *bay*, meaning rich [Atalay, 1992/I:349 & III:158, 239], thus from a rich place, are considered to have been originally of the Kimek. Moreover, the Eymür clans, also of the Üç Ok Oguz, are possibly the Aymur clans of the Uygur [Divitçioğlu, 1994:12-3].

### 3. CONQUEST

This chapter follows Kafesoğlu's *Selçuklu Ailesinin Menşei Hakkında* (1955) for the origins of the Seljuks and Köymen's *Büyük Selçuklu İmparatorluğu – Kuruluş Devri* (1979) for the Seljuks early years in Transoxania and Khurasan. Köymen's *Tuğrul Bey ve Zamanı* (1972) is the main Turkish source for the years between Dandankan and Sultan Tuğrul's death. Sümer's *Oğuzlar* (1965) and Köymen's *Selçuklu Devri Türk Tarihi* (1963) have been referred to alongside other works for supplementary material pertinent to the events being reviewed.

The regions and cities mentioned in the remainder of the thesis are identified on maps A1.2 & A1.3.

#### **3.1 The Seljuks**

Togan thought the Seljuks (originally Salçuk, then Selçük and thus now Selçuk) were of the Oguz, but initially affiliated to the Khazar Kaganate [1946:183], with which Divitçioğlu agreed [1994:55]. In the main this is not accepted by Turkish scholars [Kafesoğlu, 1955:22-5 & IA Vol. 10:353ff; Sümer, 1965:65; Köymen, 1979:7 & 1963:23].

First of all, while dialects of the eastern group of Turkic languages most likely were spoken alongside those of the western group – the Khazar kagans were of the Kök Türk imperial clan – even at its peak the kaganate does not appear to have stretched

further east than the Caspian Sea. Moreover, the Peçenek intruded over the Caspian Lowlands in the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, when among others the Magyar left the kaganate. Subsequently, Kiev fell to the Rûs (866) and the Khazar Kaganate went into decline, being over-run between 965-9 [Togan, IA Vol. 5/1:397ff; Kafesoğlu, 1994:157ff].

As for the Oguz, it is considered doubtful that the report concerning the death of the Oguz ruler in battle against the Karluk can be interpreted as taking place in the 9<sup>th</sup> century or even earlier [Sümer, 1965:64]. What is certain, however, is that the Khazars required help from the Oguz throughout the latter half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century against the Peçenek intrusion (860-89) [Kurat, IA Vol. 9:537], allying to drive them from between the Ural and Volga rivers (898-902) [Sümer, 1965:45]. Moreover, Ibn Fadlan's embassy presented a letter from the caliphate to the Oguz *Sübaşı*<sup>11</sup> (Commander-in-Chief), in 922 [Şeşen, 1975:38]. This suggests the Oguz had established a polity well before the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, coincident with Khazar decline. The Oguz Commander-in-Chief was the brother-in-law of the (Volga) Bulgar king, Almış [Ibid. 39]. That Almış was a vassal of the Khazar kagan is also clear from Ibn Fadlan's report. The Khazar kagan held Almış's son hostage and collected an annual tax [Ibid. 63-4]. Having become a Muslim, Almış had asked the caliph for aid. As a result Ibn Fadlan was assigned with a group of jurists who would teach Islam throughout Bulgar realms, not to mention craftsmen who would construct mosques and a fortification against Almış's enemies that Ibn Fadlan concluded were the Khazar [Ibid. 20 & 64]. At the time the Khazar held some Oguz prisoner, but not hostage. One of the Oguz leaders proposed that Ibn Fadlan and his

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<sup>11</sup> *Sü* meant soldier [Atalay, 1992/I:69, etc.], or army [Tekin, 1988:55], and *baş* head/leader, thus *Selçuk Sü başı* was the grandfather of Tuğrul Beg and his brother Çağrı Beg [Atalay, 1992/I:478].



group should be exchanged for these. Another Oguz leader entitled Tarkan became suspicious that Ibn Fadlan, hence the caliphate was colluding against them with the Khazar [*Ibid.* 39]. All of this appears to confirm that the Oguz were independent of the Khazar Kaganate [Sümer, 1965:61-7; Köymen, 1979:2 & 15; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff].

There is no doubt that the Seljuks were of the Kınık Oguz [Atalay, 1992/I:55]. The earliest known Seljukid, Selçuk Beg's father Dukak (or Tukak possibly from the original tugag, or standard-bearer [Turan, 1965:32], thus also Dokak or Tokak) was renowned as Temir Yalığ (Iron Bow). Temir is thought to refer to his strength, while Yalığ is considered to indicate that Dukak was of a ruling lineage [Kafesoğlu, 1955 & IA Vol. 10:353ff]. As noted in reference to the Kök Türk [Sümer, 1965:20], the bow is thought to have symbolized sovereignty among Turkic people [Kafesoğlu, 1955 & IA Vol. 10:353ff]. Nonetheless, it is not known where the Kınık were at this time [Kafesoğlu, 1955], or if Dukak was of their ruling lineage [Köymen, 1979:30 & 1963:23].

Another suggestion is that Temir Yalığ instead indicates Dukak was an *alp*, a warrior in the service of the Khazars whose son was raised by the Oguz yabgu (possibly from shan-yü, the name of the Hsiung-nu leaders) [Divitçioğlu, 1994:55-8 & 60-3; Esin, 1980a:57]. To be sure, on the steppe a commoner or for that matter an adopted son could merit nobility through martial prowess and leadership [Mardin, 1992b:81]. Togan proposed that the Seljuks stemmed from a tent-pole sharpener [1981:182-6]. While there is no evidence for this either [Kafesoğlu, 1955], Selçuk Beg's sons did have biblical names: Israil (Israel), Mikail (Michael), Musa (Moses), Yusuf (Joseph) and/or Yunus (Jonah) [Sümer, 1965:69; Köymen, 1979:31]. This has been argued to reflect Khazar cultural pre-eminence in the region where the Kınık were situated, as each had also

Turkic names or titles: Israil's was Arslan,<sup>12</sup> Musa's was Inanç, and Yusuf's was Yınal [Turan, 1965:34-7 & 49]. According to Divitçioğlu, however, Selçuk Beg's name stems from the Çuvaş for white, namely şüre, şarı, or sarı, hence Sar-çuk (the ending -çuk meaning little) and through an orthographic mistake Salçuk [1994:56-7]. He argued that this interpretation of Selçuk Beg's name was supported by the Seljuk's legend of origin. According to the legend, Dukak had objected to a campaign against a group of Muslims with such vehemence that he had come to blows with the Khazar kagan's regent, the Hakan-beh. Although it was ordered that he be captured and killed, this was ignored. Instead the parties were persuaded to reconcile their differences. Divitçioğlu proposed that the legend concerns the Khazar soldiery's reported refusal to campaign against the Muslims in the Caucasus (913). These had attacked and killed the Rûs merchants permitted to trade in Islamdom by the Khazar Kagan in return for money (912) [*Ibid.* 55-6]. This is highly unlikely since on Dukak's death the Oguz yabgu is said to have taken Selçuk Beg, then 17-18 years old, under his wing, appointing him later still Commander-in-Chief. The importance of this appointment can be determined from Ibn Fadlan, according to whom the letter from the caliphate was presented to a person in this position.

Whatever Dukak's origins, legend has it that the Oguz yabgu's wife became wary of Selçuk Beg's growing popularity, not to mention his flagrant ambition, insisting he be killed. Accordingly, when Selçuk Beg heard this he left with his family and followers

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<sup>12</sup> According to Köprülü [IA Vol. 1:598-609], the original may be *ars* (being related to *arsl* or reddish-yellow [Atalay, 1992/IV:37], as in a light chestnut horse, light-brown hair, or dark complexioned person) with the suffix *-lan* as in *kaplan* or tiger, etc. so that in some Turkic dialects it is *arslan*, particularly as red-haired lions were known in Kazerûn in Fars, lions also being reported on the western banks of the Amu-Darya River. The lion was a Buddhist heraldic emblem, which entered Turkic culture during the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and became frequent as a name or title after the Kök Türk Taspar Kagan (572-81), who was a Buddhist, used it [Esin, 1980:68 & 101].

[Köymen, 1979:7-11 & 1963:23-4; Sümer, 1965:65; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff; Turan, 1965:40-2; Şeşen, 1975:37].

The decision to migrate to Jand, which was on the left bank of the Syr-Darya near the Aral Sea, southeast of Yengi-Kent where the Oguz rulers wintered, appears to have been a judicious move [Köymen, 1979:18-9 & 21-3; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff & Turan, 1965:40-5]. Whereas Yengi-Kent and Huvara, founded by Muslim colonists from Transoxania, were inside Oguz territory, Jand was considered to be on the marches [*Ibid.* 17 & 1963:24]. The border lands between Islamdom and the Oguz polity stretched from Khwarazm, south of the Aral Sea, northeast to Isfijab [Şeşen, 1985:210]. The region around present day Çimkent, Isfijab, had nearly 1700 *ribats*, namely fortifications built by notables or a city for the gazi from their region [Barthold, 1990:190]. Thus Transoxania was considered to be at the forefront of jihad, the war against non-believers [Köymen, 1979:18; see also Şeşen, 1985:210]. Selçuk Beg appears to have taken advantage of this. Said to have arrived in Jand with only a hundred horsemen, their total wealth with their spare mounts being 1500 camels and 50,000 sheep [*Ibid.* 20], he rallied the local gazis against the Oguz yabgu's tax collector. The reason put forward was that Muslims should not have to pay tax to the non-believer [*Ibid.* 24; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff & Turan, 1965:40-5]. This and possibly similar martial activity at the forefront of the war against the non-believers is thought to have increased the Seljuks' wealth and number [*Ibid.* 26 & 30], such that Selçuk Beg came to be referred to as al-Malik al-Gazi [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff; Turan, 1965:40-5]. As a result the Seljuks were able to come to an agreement with the Samanids sometime between 985 and 993. Accordingly, they would defend the Samanid borders in exchange for pasturage around the village of

Nur, between Bokhara and Samarkand. The Türkmen<sup>13</sup> who took up these pastures were under the command of Selçuk Beg's son Arslan (Israil) [Köymen, 1979:34-5; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff & Turan, 1965:40-5].

The Samanids had established themselves in Transoxania at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, taking Isfijab from the first Karakhanid, Bilge Kül Kadir Khan, in 840 [Barthold, 1990:228; also Pritsak, IA Vol. 6:253]. By the end of the century Samanid hegemony extended south-west into Khurasan, but thereafter their power began to wane [*Ibid.* 225ff; also Büchner, IA Vol. 10:140-3]. In 962, Alp Tekin (originally Tigin, then Tegin), the Turkic mamluk commander of the Samanid palace corps, attempted to establish a dynasty in Ghazna [*Ibid.* 269], which his own mamluk Sebük Tekin was able to do (977) [*Ibid.* 280].

The Samanids also lost control of their remaining Turkic commanders. One of these, Ali made a secret agreement with the Karakhanid Buğra Khan Harun to keep Khurasan in exchange for Transoxania. The Karakhanids entered from Isfijab and took Bokhara (992), having defeated the other main Turkic commander, Faik, who then joined them. However, Buğra Khan Harun had to withdraw to Samarkand due to sudden illness, not to mention growing danger from the Türkmen under Arslan, who pursued and plundered his retreating forces. Buğra Khan Harun never recovered from his illness and died [*Ibid.* 276-9 & 289; Köymen, 1963:27-8]. Left alone, Faik allied with Ali against the Samanids who turned to the Ghaznavids for help. Sebük Tekin defeated Ali, but kept Khurasan when the Karakhanids re-entered Transoxania (994-6). The Ghaznavids and

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<sup>13</sup> According to Sümer [1965:60], the Türkmen were Turkic people who had accepted Islam [also Divitçioğlu, 1994:53-5].

the Karakhanids agreed on the Amu-Darya as their border, leaving only Bokhara to the Samanids. In 997 both the Samanid and Ghaznavid rulers died. At the same time Sebük Tekin's eldest son Mahmud finally overcame his brother, the Karakhanid Ilek Khan Nasr took Bokhara and with it the Samanid treasury (999). Nonetheless, the Samanid prince, Isma'îl Muntasir, was able to escape and gather an army in Khwarazm. Having taken Bokhara back (1000), he was defeated and withdrew to Khurasan, where his brother Nasr and Mahmud of Ghazna also defeated him. Thus he came to Jand to enlist the Seljuks' help (1003) [*Ibid.* 280-9; Köymen, 1979:48 & 1963:28].

Selçuk Beg's eldest living son Israil is referred to as Arslan Peygu (Beygu~Yabgu) in this context [*Ibid.* 289]. This is taken to suggest the Oguz polity had dissolved sometime after the Khazar Kaganate (625-1015) [Sümer, 1965:68-9]. Certainly, a branch of the Oguz is known to have attacked the (Volga) Bulgar in 985 with the Rûs [*Ibid.* 65-6]. As these may have been from the Oguz wintering in the Caspian Lowlands at least as early as the first half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century and raiding across the frozen Volga in sufficient numbers to necessitate the Khazar Kagan to take the field against them [*Ibid.* 62; Şeşen, 1985:49], it is doubtful that they were affiliated to the Oguz yabgu. The Oguz polity appears to have been situated further south, in the main stretching from Üst-Yurt, through Kyzyl-Kum into the mountains parallel to the Syr-Darya [Sümer, IA Vol. 9:378ff]. In any case, having agreed to help Isma'îl Muntasir, the Seljuks defeated the forces under the Karakhanid Commander-in-Chief, Tekin, near Samarkand, which prompted the Karakhanid Ilek Khan Nasr to advance. The Seljuks surprised him in a raid and took 18 commanders prisoner. Isma'îl Muntasir withdrew when the Seljuks refused to hand these over, undecided whether to keep them hostage or release them to Ilek Khan Nasr [Köymen, 1979:49-50 & 1963:29; also Sümer, 1965:69].

İsmâ'il Muntasir returned to Transoxania soon afterwards but was defeated outside Bokhara and retired to Nur, from where he appears to have been able to rally the people of Samarkand, not to mention also the Seljuks. Once again the Seljuks surprised the Karakhanids' forces under İlek Khan Nasr, defeating them near Samarkand (1004). When the Karakhanid returned that same year, however, Arslan did not take the field. The assumption is the Seljuks had plundered enough baggage, weapons and horses, not to mention prisoners who would be held to ransom or sold into slavery. Thus İsmâ'il Muntasir was defeated one last time when 5,000 Oguz under Hasan Tak deserted to İlek Khan Nasr on the battlefield [Köymen, 1979:59-61 & 1963:29; also Sümer, 1965:69-70].

In view of the new balance of power in the region, namely Ghaznavid expansion into Khurasan and that of the Karakhanid into Transoxania, Arslan appears to have withdrawn to his pastures near Nur, where the Karakhanid İlek Khan Nasr took up residence [Köymen, 1979:100]. When Selçuk Beg died soon afterwards and was buried in Jand (1007-8), at the age of 107, Arslan was his eldest living son since it is presumed Mikail had been killed in action sometime afterwards 995. Selçuk Beg had raised Mikail's sons Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg,<sup>14</sup> but after his death they were forced to leave Jand with their uncle Musa for the environs of Bokhara, or possibly Samarkand [Sümer, 1965:65]. Seeing the Seljuks as his main obstacle to the complete conquest of Transoxania, İlek Khan Nasr is said to have gathered his forces. Although Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg are thought to have approached the Karakhanid Buğra Khan, who resided near Talas, this initiative does not appear to have worked out. Tuğrul Beg was taken hostage, but Çağrı Beg launched a successful surprise attack that enabled him to trade Buğra Khan's

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<sup>14</sup> Çağrı meant blue-eyed merlin, the avian emblem of the Kınık, and Tuğrul crested goshawk [Esin, 1994:202]. Beg is the lowest title of Turkic nobility, commonly that of a clan leader [Atalay, 1992/I:22, etc.]

commanders for his brother. As a result, Tuğrul Beg retired into the desert and Çağrı Beg took 3,000 mounted archers with him into Anatolia [Köymen, 1979:96-104 & 1963:32; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff].

Sümer accepts that the Seljuks left Jand to join Arslan sometime after Selçuk Beg's death, possibly under pressure from the Baran clan.<sup>15</sup> Shah-Malik, who was of the Baran, thus possibly the grandson of the Oguz yabgu with whom Selçuk Beg fell out [Divitçioğlu 1994:58-9], is known to have reigned there from at least 1030. Sümer accepts also Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg approached the Karakhanid Buğra Khan, but not that either stayed in Talas or that Çağrı Beg then went on to Anatolia and the Caucasus [Sümer, 1965:76].

Originally proposed by Yınanç and accepted by all Turkish scholars except Sümer, the expedition to Anatolia attributed to Çağrı Beg is thought to have lasted five years (1016-21). If correct, Çağrı Beg appears to have been able to enlist the aid of the Türkmen already in the region and attack the Armenian kingdom of Vaspurakan (1018-19). Next, Çağrı Beg is thought to have attacked the realms of the Shaddadid dynasty. Having sacked Georgia, the Türkmen under Çağrı Beg are said to have been held by the Armenians in Ani near present day Kars and retired to go their own ways (1021) [Yınanç, 1944:35-6; thus Köymen, 1979:104-10 & 1963:33, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff & Turan, 1965:52-3].

On his way westward, reputedly Çağrı Beg had crossed Khurasan without the permission of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna. Accordingly, the Ghaznavid governor of

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<sup>15</sup> While Sümer does not consider the Baran of the Oguz, according to Turan they stem from the Yazır clan of the Oguz, namely Baran, ruler of Yengi-kent [1965:47-8]. After the collapse of the Oguz polity, a branch is known to have helped found the Karakoyunlu polity.

Tus, Arslan Jadhib, had sent a force to capture Çağrı Beg. As his failure made Sultan Mahmud suspicious, Arslan Jadhib, now fearful for his life, is said to have taken extensive precautions for Çağrı Beg's return. Clearly Çağrı Beg got through once again. With his prestige thus enhanced by his exploits, Çağrı Beg is said to have rallied the Türkmen (presumably those still not affiliated to Arslan Yabgu) around Bokhara to his banner. When Tuğrul Beg joined him, Arslan Yabgu advised his nephews to disperse, as the Seljuks would be perceived as a threat to Karakhanid power in Transoxania. This is why it is thought that the brothers did not emerge again until Sultan Mahmud had tricked Arslan Yabgu into captivity [Köymen, 1979:106, 111-4 & 1963:33; also Turan, 1965:52-3].

What appears certain is that the Karakhanid prince, possibly Ilek Khan Nasr's brother (d.1012-3), Ali Tekin, became the ruler of Bokhara (1014). Although subsequently taken prisoner by his great uncle (1017-8), the Karakhanid Arslan Khan, Ali Tekin escaped and returned (1020-21). Having married Arslan Yabgu's daughter, he appears to have defeated a Karakhanid army led by Arslan Khan's brother with the Seljuks' help. The people of Bokhara, however, are said to have not liked Ali Tekin. Moreover, members of the Karakhanid dynasty in Transoxania had been attempting to wrest Khurasan from Sultan Mahmud since 1006. As a result Sultan Mahmud entered Transoxania (1025), ostensibly encouraged by complaints from the people there. Simultaneously, the Karakhanid Kadir Khan entered from Kashgar and took Samarkand [Köymen, 1979:68-72 & 1963:30; see also Turan, 1965:52, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff, Sümer, 1965:70-1 and Barthold, 1991:292-5 & 299-304].

Sultan Mahmud and Kadir Khan decided that Bokhara should be given to the latter's son. More importantly, they agreed that the Seljukid Arslan should be recruited or





otherwise dealt with by Sultan Mahmud. Arslan Yabgu and Ali Tekin had retired to the desert. Sultan Mahmud did not pursue Ali Tekin although he captured his wife and daughter. He sent an envoy to Arslan Yabgu, inviting him to discuss the defence of Khurasan during his annual campaigns into India. When Arslan Yabgu arrived at court, Sultan Mahmud asked how strong a force he could muster if called upon? Arslan Yabgu replied that his own followers totalled 30,000 but that he could call also on the Seljuks, another 10,000. When Sultan Mahmud pressed him for more Arslan Yabgu bragged he could call upon 100,000 horsemen from Balkhan (Balhan), a mountain situated between the Kara-Kum Desert and the Caspian Sea, below Üst-Yurt, and if need be a further 200,000 from Turkmenistan. Mahmud tricked Arslan and imprisoned him in the fortress of Kalinjar in India [Köymen, 1979:78-89 & 1963:31; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff & Sümer, 1965:71].

Arslan Yabgu had two sons, Kutalmış and Resul-Tekin who reputedly tried for years thereafter to free their father. Upon Arslan's death (1032), however, both are thought to have joined their cousins, Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg. Nevertheless, some, if not all, of Arslan's followers refused right from the outset. After Arslan's capture, 4,000 families asked Sultan Mahmud for pasturage in Khurasan in return for their martial services. Their request was granted despite objection from the governor of Tus, Arslan Jadhib (1025-6). The reason given by their leaders, namely Yağmur, Buka, Gök-Taş and Kızıl, was persecution by Tuğrul and Çağrı begs who wanted to subordinate them. Even though thus weakened, Tuğrul and Çağrı begs appear to have refused Ali Tekin's invitation to support him in the conquest of Samarkand. As a result, Ali Tekin is thought to have invited Yusuf Yinal to become the leader of the Türkmen, giving him Arslan's title of yabgu. When Yusuf accepted, reputedly Çağrı Beg had to restrain

Tuğrul Beg from attacking his uncle. According to this interpretation of events, Ali Tekin had Yusuf killed and attacked the Seljuks who suffered heavy losses (1029) [Köymen, 1979:121-8 & 1963:34-5; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff & Turan, 1965:56].

Whereas both Kafesoğlu and Turan proposed that the Seljuks consequently withdrew to Khwarazm, Sümer (and Köymen) was of the opinion that Tuğrul and Çağrı begs had been wintering there for some time with the permission of Altun-Taş, its Ghaznavid governor since 1017. It is noteworthy that this date is coincident with that proposed for Çağrı Beg's expedition to Anatolia, not to mention Ali Tekin's imprisonment. Sümer also suggested Yusuf acceded to the leadership of the Seljuks on merit rather than intrigue, and did not take into consideration Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg's alleged conflict with Ali Tekin. He suggested instead that on Ali Tekin's death the Seljuks fell out with his commander-in-chief and regent Alp Kara (1034), which is when he thought also that Yusuf was killed. In support of his argument he pointed out that the Seljuks are thought to have fought with Ali Tekin against the Ghaznavid forces under Altun-Taş (1032), who was ordered to invade Transoxania by Sultan Mas'ud after he had succeeded to the throne of Ghazna. According to Barthold, on Altun-Taş's death from wounds sustained during the said battle, his son Harun allied with Ali Tekin and the Seljuks against Sultan Mas'ud (1034) [Köymen, 1979:131-160 & 1963:37 & Sümer, 1965:72 & 76-7; see also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff, Turan, 1965:57 & Barthold, 1990:315-7].

In any event, on their arrival in Khwarazm, the Seljuks were surprised by Shah-Malik during a dawn raid and lost seven to eight thousand men, not to mention countless women and children who were taken captive (1034). The Seljuks appear to have been so badly depleted that the gazi of the Nemek ribat on the northern banks of the Amu-

Darya are said to have considered killing them. When soon after Sultan Mas'ud had their new ally the Khwarazmshah Harun assassinated, the Seljuks were forced to cross the Amu-Darya into Khurasan (1035) [*Ibid.*].

### *3.2 The so-called Türkmen of Iraq*

The 4,000 tents of Türkmen who had been affiliated to Arslan Yabgu are referred to in Turkish historiography as the Türkmen of Iraq because of their adventures in western Iran. They are also known as the Türkmen of Balkhan, the Yabgulu or the Navekkiye (men of the quiver). Rather than join Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg on Arslan Yabgu's imprisonment, they requested pasturage in Khurasan from Sultan Mahmud, in exchange for their martial services (1025-6). The pastures that were granted were in the vicinity of Nesa, Baverd and Ferave, which were situated along the Atrek River. The river flows from the Köpetdag Mountains into the Caspian Sea, south of the Kara-Kum Desert and the Balkhan Mountain, from where others are said to have joined them during the following two years. This appears to have strained their relationship with the local administration and inhabitants, because the Türkmen let their flocks graze in the fields and went off with the peasants' animals. On the other hand, when the Türkmen were unable to pay their taxes, allegedly collectors confiscated their livestock and sold their children into slavery. Mounting local complaints finally led Sultan Mahmud to command the governor of Tus, Arslan Jadhib, to restore public order. This he seems to have failed to do despite several attempts. At Arslan Jadhib's request, Sultan Mahmud personally took the field and defeated the Türkmen near the Ferave ribat, reportedly killing 4,000 men, women and children (1028) [Köymen, 1979:165-174 & 1963:39-40; also Sümer, 1965:73, Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:353ff & Turan, 1965].

Having cleared Khurasan of the Türkmen, Sultan Mahmud took Rayy (Rey), outside present day Tehran, appointing his son Mas'ud governor (1029). When he died, his other son Muhammad initially acceded to the throne (1030). Mas'ud revolted and invited Yağmur Beg back to Khurasan. When Mas'ud had acceded to the throne of Ghazna with his help, Yağmur persuaded his mentor to allow also Kızıl, Buka and Gök-Taş back into Khurasan. Although these Türkmen begs served Sultan Mas'ud well on his campaigns, their conduct remained cause for complaint in Serakhs and Baverd. They are said also to have fought a Ghaznavid force, but no reason is given for this. Possibly the said force was sent to restore public order. Whatever the case, Sultan Mas'ud ordered his Commander-in-Chief of Iraq, Taş-Faraş to press them into service under Humar-Taş, their commander when on campaign. Since Yağmur and fifty Türkmen begs were executed on the way back from Iraq, the suggestion is that possibly they resisted becoming mamluks (1033). Yağmur's son and Kızıl, both of whom had been in Balkhan at the time, took up arms. In turn this appears to have incited Buka and Gök-Taş who were still in Rayy. Although Sultan Mas'ud then ordered Buka and Gök-Taş to be executed, for some reason this was not carried out. When the Türkmen in Transoxania joined those from Balkhan, Sultan Mas'ud was forced to take the field with his best commanders in order to end the devastation the raids were causing (1034) [Köymen, 1979:174-197 & 1963:40-1; also Sümer, 1965:74-5 & Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff].

Sultan Mas'ud had also ordered the assassination of the rebellious Khwarazmshah Harun. Although the order was executed successfully, it merely worsened the situation. Coming as it did hard on the heels of Ali Tekin's death and Shah-Malik's dawn raid, the Seljuks, politically isolated, entered Khurasan. They had with them the Türkmen under

Ibrahim Yinal, who was Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg's mother's son from their uncle Yusuf; according to custom Yusuf had married her upon his elder brother Mikail's death. The Seljuks are said to have crossed the Amu-Darya with only 900 mounted archers but soon had 10,000. The suggestion, therefore, is that many of the Türkmen raiding Khurasan rallied to their banner. Three envoys, representing Musa Beygu (yabgu), Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg, presented a letter to the Ghaznavid governor of Khurasan, requesting pasturage around Nesa, Baverd and Ferave, in exchange for their martial services. This is where Sultan Mahmud had situated Arslan Yabgu's followers, with the same intention. When Sultan Mas'ud's minister received the letter, he is reported to have exclaimed that Khurasan was lost. The Seljuks' letter clearly stated their reasons for entering Khurasan – Ali Tekin and Harun's deaths – and also offered to send members of their dynasty in rotation to the sultan's palace as hostage for good behaviour [Köymen, 1979:197-201 & 1963:41; also Sümer, 1965:77 & Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff].

Sultan Mas'ud responded by sending an army equipped with war elephants. Although his commander, Beydoğdu, objected that the chain of command, which the sultan had set up, was too complicated, this was disregarded. Sure enough, as the Ghaznavid advance units came upon the Seljuk camp, despite Beydoğdu's orders to push on, they began to kill the shepherds, women and children left behind, taking their animals and tents. Consequently, Beydoğdu was forced to lead the Ghaznavid centre through the mêlée to the village of Nesa, where the Seljuks were lying in wait. During the battle that ensued some of the more inexperienced commanders tried to water their horses, which had become thirsty on the hot desert sand. The Ghaznavid soldiery panicked, thinking their commanders were deserting, and the Seljuks routed the 17,000 strong force,

plundering all its supplies and baggage (June 29, 1035). Sultan Mas'ud capitulated without further action, giving Dihistan to Çağrı Beg, Nesa to Tuğrul Beg and Ferave to Musa Yabgu. The Seljuks, however, did not send their members in rotation to the palace and laughed at the presents sent by the sultan. Their success attracted fresh groups to Khurasan, including a branch of the so-called Türkmen of Iraq – though which branch is not specified. Within four months the Türkmen were once again letting their livestock graze in the fields and leaving with the locals' animals. Sultan Mas'ud deployed a force of 15,000 men from Nishapur to ensure public order, which appears to have been successful. The Seljuks did, however, then request three urban centres, namely Marv, Serakhs and Bavard, ostensibly to support their growing number (1036). Accordingly, in return for the taxes collected by Ghaznavid officials, the Seljuks offered to clear Khurasan of marauding bands. When their request was not met, having instead been appointed dihkans, notable land owners who acted as tax collectors, the Seljuks embarked on a series of raids [Köymen, 1979:201-37 & 1963:42-5; also Sümer, 1965:78-9 & Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff].

Apparently encouraged by the Seljuks' success, Buka and Gök-Taş routed the Ghaznavid forces under the command of Taş-Faraş and dismembered his body, sacking and plundering Rayy (1036). Buka, Gök-Taş and two other Türkmen begs, namely Oğuzoğlu Mansur and Dana, then migrated to Azarbayjan, possibly at the invitation of Vahsudan of the Rawwadid dynasty, known to have been at odds during this period with al-Khaija of the Hezebaniyye clan. In view of their relentless plundering, however, Vahsudan, his adversary al-Khaija and the local populace united against Buka, Gök-Taş and Mansur who withdrew to Iraq al-Ajam as Western Iran was then known (1037). Having married Vahsudan's sister or daughter, Dana appears to have stayed behind.

Gök-Taş and Mansur besieged Hamadan, while Buka joined Kızıl outside Rayy. These latter sacked Rayy (1038), then joined Gök-Taş and together sacked also Hamadan (1038). Kızıl appears to have married Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg's sister at some point and settled in Rayy where he died (1041). What happened to Arslan Yabgu's followers thereafter is part of Seljuks history [Sümer, 1965:80-2; also Yınanç, 1944:37-8].

### ***3.3 Victory at Dandankan***

Although strongly advised to do so by his council of ministers, Sultan Mas'ud decided not to lead his forces against the Seljuks. Arguing that he had taken the requisite defensive measures throughout Khurasan, the sultan embarked instead on a campaign into India (1037). There he learned of the sacking of Rayy by the Türkmén of Iraq and of the Seljuks' raids on urban centres in the environs of Jurjan. Insisting on the wisdom of his decision, he ordered the force he had based in Nishapur to engage the Seljuks. The Ghaznavid army did so, but, as his ministers had feared, lost the battle (1038). The Seljuks now divided northern Khurasan among themselves; the regions around Serakhs, Marv and Nishapur were apportioned respectively between Musa Yabgu, Çağrı and Tuğrul Beg. More importantly, Tuğrul Beg was chosen leader, or more correctly appointed *primus inter pares*. Accordingly, he entered Nishapur with 3,000 mounted archers, a drawn bow in his hand and three arrows in his belt. Since the Seljuks had sent only two envoys with their request for Marv, Serakhs and Baverd, it seems the suggestion is that Musa Yabgu had lost any authority he had over Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg [Köymen, 1979:238-78 & 1963:46-8; also Sümer, 1965:82 & Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff].

Upon receiving news of his army's defeat, Sultan Mas'ud had to concede his error of judgement and finally took the field against the Seljuks. With this in mind he arrived in Balkh, in eastern Khurasan. Once there, however, he prevaricated on whether to deal first with Böri Tekin, the son of Ilek Khan Nasr [Barthold, 1990:20], who had been raiding Khurasan. Although he decided to do so, severe winter conditions prevented him from gaining an advantage and he was forced back. In Balkh, he received news that one of Çağrı Beg's units had skirmished with a Ghaznavid force. Sultan Mas'ud advanced and met Çağrı Beg at Pul-i Karvan, but the Seljuks did not commit their forces. They sent out a company of archers and when these tired replaced them with another. Frustrated by these tactics, Sultan Mas'ud took command and advanced on the Seljuks, whereupon they melted away into the desert (April 1039). Çağrı Beg is thought to have been assessing the Ghaznavids' strength and commitment under Sultan Mas'ud. This seems to have proved crucial at a council that the Seljuks held to assess their situation. At this meeting Tuğrul Beg and Ibrahim Yinal are said to have suggested they evacuate Khurasan for the environs of Rayy and Jurjan, from where they could raid Azarbayjan and Anatolia at will. Apparently Çağrı Beg objected, arguing that Sultan Mas'ud would follow them there, too. According to Çağrı Beg the Ghaznavids were superior in number, equipment and supplies, but their dependence on supplies, not to mention their reliance on war elephants and foot soldiers as shock troops, all slowed them down, making them vulnerable to the hit and run tactics of steppe warfare. Tuğrul Beg and Musa Yabgu are said to have also expressed concern for the loyalty of the Turkic mamluks who had defected from the Ghaznavids, but once again Çağrı Beg prevailed. Accordingly, he argued that they had deserted because their commanders had been executed on Sultan Mas'ud's orders and proposed they should be put at the



vanguard to prove their allegiance [Köymen, 1979:278-90 & 1963:49; also Sümer, 1965:83 & Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff].

As a result, the Seljuks held their ground when Sultan Mas'ud advanced on Serakhs. They harried and harassed the Ghaznavid forces, preventing their cavalry from procuring sufficient water and pasturage. Nevertheless, Sultan Mas'ud held back for Ramadan to end. When he tried to engage in battle, however, the Seljuks withdrew to resume their hit and run tactics (June 14-21, 1039). On the advice of his war council Sultan Mas'ud offered the Seljuks peace on the condition they returned to Nesa, Bavard and Ferave. Although they accepted, the Seljuks did not evacuate Serakhs, Marv and Nishapur, or send an envoy to Herat as agreed. Sultan Mas'ud had retired there to prepare for an autumn campaign in case they did not comply. During this period the Seljuks are thought to have strengthened their alliances with the Khwarazmshah and Böri Tekin whom they helped to defeat Ali Tekin's sons. Meanwhile the Oguz migration into Khurasan seems to have also intensified. When an old woman with one eye, one hand and one leg, who was wielding an axe, was asked why she had come, she is said to have replied that she wanted a piece of the treasures she had heard were being unearthed [Köymen, 1979:290-315 & 1963:49-51; also Sümer, 1965:83-4 and Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff].

At the end of autumn Sultan Mas'ud took command of a lightly equipped force to counter the Seljuks' superior manoeuvring ability, and the second phase of the war commenced (November 1039). Despite countless skirmishes, however, Sultan Mas'ud failed to engage the Seljuks who withdrew to Balkhan Mountain. There was famine in Khurasan, due to drought and the constant warfare. Nevertheless, Sultan Mas'ud retired to Nishapur where he had his troops trained in desert tactics (January 1040). In the

spring, he advanced on the Seljuks via Tus (March 1040). The Seljuks again considered whether to leave Khurasan, but Çağrı Beg prevailed once more. Sultan Mas'ud was not able to stay in Tus, due to the desperate shortage of supplies, and he attacked Serakhs. Although he took the city from the Seljuks, the Ghaznavid army lost countless animals and foot soldiers on the way (May 1040). The sultan was advised to return to Herat, where there was ample food, water and pasturage, but instead he decided to push on to Marv in pursuit of the Seljuks (May 1040). This proved to be disastrous as the drought had dried all the wells. The Seljuks continued to harry the now abject Ghaznavid forces. Although Sultan Mas'ud reached the fortification of Dandankan, due to a lack of sufficient water there, too, he ordered his forces on to a nearby reservoir. Despite Sultan Mas'ud and his son Mawdud's personal attempts to marshal their forces against the Seljuks' raids, when a group of these joined their former comrades, the Ghaznavid army lost its discipline and was routed (May 23, 1040). During this last encounter, which never progressed beyond the early skirmishes into a set-piece, the Seljuk leaders are said to have remained behind the lines until informed of Sultan Mas'ud and his administration's flight. Thus it was the former Ghaznavid mamluks who claimed victory for the Seljuks and took most of the plunder. In open appreciation of their success, Tuğrul Beg is thought to have promised them land in the environs of Rayy and Isfahan [Köymen, 1979:312-45 & 1963:52-3; also Sümer, 1965:84-6, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff & Turan, 1965:63-6].

### ***3.4 Seljukid Sovereignty***

According to Köymen, the nature and purpose of the newly founded Seljuk polity can be deduced from the words attributed to Tuğrul Beg at the council held in Marv later

that month (May 1040). These are that *world dominion* can not be achieved without unity among the Seljuk dynasty. Once a letter had been sent to the caliphate requesting the legitimization of their rule, in keeping with Turkic ideology the Seljuks apportioned their newly gained realm and those to be conquered among the dynasty. Çağrı Beg took Marv, thus the major part of Khurasan. Musa Yabgu was given the task of conquering Herat and Sistan. Later that year Ibrahim Yinal's brother Er-Taş was assigned to Musa Yabgu with this purpose. Çağrı Beg's eldest son Kara-Arslan Kavurt was given the separate task of conquering Kirman. In the West, Tuğrul Beg took upon himself the conquest of Iraq al-Ajam and al-Arab (Western Iran and Mesopotamia) from Nishapur, with his subordinates Ibrahim Yinal, Çağrı Beg's son Alp-Sungur (more commonly referred to as Yakuti) and Arslan Yabgu's eldest son Kutalmış. Ibrahim Yinal was assigned the conquest of Kuhistan (Jibal), Kutalmış that of Jurjan northeast of Tabaristan. As confirmed by the khutba, the special Friday midday prayers that referred to Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg respectively as Sultan and Malik, instead of Kagan and yabgu, theirs was the senior branch of the Seljuk dynasty [Köymen, 1979:345-66 & 1963:53-5, 100; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff].

As decided, Selçuk Beg's only living son, Musa, now referred to as Yabgu Kalan,<sup>16</sup> took Herat and from there Er-Taş incorporated Sistan, whose ruler al-Fadl proclaimed allegiance (November 1040). Er-Taş then fell out with Yabgu Kalan and returned to Khurasan because Musa wanted to appropriate Sistan from him. Be that as it may, when he had decided to take the field against the Seljuks, Sultan Mas'ud had offered Khwarazm to Shah-Malik on the condition he proclaimed allegiance (1038). Shah-Malik,

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<sup>16</sup> More correctly Kelan from *Yabgu-i kelan*, or *Ulug-yabgu* (literally Great Yabgu) [Turan, 1965:49].

however, had not moved against Khwarazm until after Sultan Mas'ud's demise at Dandankan. Now Shah-Malik defeated Altun-Taş's son Isma'il, who withdrew to Gurganj (February 1041). However, on learning that a Ghaznavid army was on its way, the Khwarazmshah Isma'il left Gurganj and took refuge with Çağrı Beg (March 1041). Shah-Malik entered Gurganj unaware that Sultan Mas'ud had been killed (January 1041) and had the khutba read in the latter's name (April 1041). Shah-Malik at first defeated Çağrı Beg and the Khwarazmshah Isma'il, but when Tuğrul Beg joined them he was routed and Gurganj fell (1042). The Seljuks did not restore Khwarazm to Isma'il and instead a governor was appointed. Meanwhile Er-Taş had returned to Sistan upon news from al-Fadl that Sultan Mawdud of Ghazna had sent an army to Khwarazm. He defeated this army (July 1042) and later captured Shah-Malik on his way to Ghazna with his family and treasury (1042/3). Er-Taş handed him over to Çağrı Beg who had Shah-Malik imprisoned and killed. [Köymen, 1963:221; also Sümer, 1965:88, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff, Barthold, 1990:322-3 & Turan, 1965:69-71].

When Çağrı Beg became ill the following year (1043/4), his son Alp-Arslan (thought to have been born on January 20, 1029) is said to have defeated another army sent by Sultan Mawdud. Alp-Arslan conquered Tirmiz and its environs, immediately north of Balkh and the Amu-Darya, successfully defending these against the Karakhanid Arslan Khan who was forced to recognise the Seljuks' sovereignty along the Amu-Darya from Tirmiz to Bokhara (1047). Alp-Arslan then helped Çağrı Beg in his unsuccessful attempts to conquer Ghazna. When Ibrahim acceded to the throne of Ghazna, however, Çağrı Beg made peace (1059). As the Hindu Kush became the agreed border between them, the Ghaznavids lost communication with Transoxania and the

Karakhanids. Çağrı Beg died the following year at the age of 70 (1060) [Köymen, 1972:3-7 & 1963:222; also Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:364 & Turan, 1965:69-71].

Before being called back by Çağrı Beg to help fight Shah-Malik, Tuğrul Beg had incorporated Jurjan and Tabaristan. When Kızıl died, İbrahim Yinal took Rayy and Tuğrul Beg moved his capital from Nishapur to Rayy (1042). The Seljuks' success is thought to have attracted more Türkmén. Thus possibly it was their depredations that caused Caliph al-Qa'im (1031-75) to send his chief judge, al-Mawardi, to Tuğrul Beg, who replied that the Seljuks' realms had grown too small for their number, referring to the Türkmén as 'my soldiers' (1043/4). It is possible, however, that these were the Türkmén of Iraq. On Kızıl's death Tuğrul Beg sent an envoy to Gök-Taş, Buka, Oğuzoğlu Mansur and Anasioğlu who refused his invitation, stating their suspicion that he wanted to trick them into captivity. Presumably unable to return to Khurasan because İbrahim Yinal had cut off their retreat, or to Azarbayjan where Vahsudan had had thirty Türkmén begs killed at a feast in their honour (1041), the Türkmén of Iraq are said to have moved toward Lake Urmia, immediately west of Tabriz. Here others already in Azarbayjan appear to have joined them and together entered eastern Anatolia. Since the Byzantine governor general refused them passage, however, they seem to have headed south. With Mansur possibly busy elsewhere, Gök-Taş, Buka and Anasioğlu defeated a force gathered by the Uqailid and Marwanid dynasties. Nevertheless, the head of the latter dynasty, Nasr al-Dawla appears to have tricked Mansur into captivity. Although released to Gök-Taş, Buka and Anasioğlu with many goods in exchange for their departure, the Türkmén apparently reneged. While Buka and Anasioğlu raided the environs of Diyarbakır (Amid), Gök-Taş and Mansur took Mosul, having the khutba read in Tuğrul Beg's name (1043). Their rough treatment of the inhabitants caused the

Buyid ruler, who was in Baghdad at the time, to complain with the Marwanid Nasr al-Dawla to Tuğrul Beg who promised to bring them under control. Before he could do so, however, the local Arab and Kurdish rulers rallied to the Uqailids and together they defeated Gök-Taş and Mansur who returned to the environs of Diyarbakır (April 1044). There they received an envoy from Tuğrul Beg who suggested that instead of raiding within Islamdom they should move to Azarbayjan and join in the jīhad against the Byzantine Empire. On their way they defeated a Byzantine force near Lake Van and captured its commander, the governor who had refused them passage. He was sold on the slave market in Tabriz (1045). Although there is no further record of Gök-Taş and Mansur, Buka and Anasıoğlu are said to have fought one night when drunk outside Diyarbakır, which they had been assigned to conquer, and died from their wounds [Köymen, 1963:160-1 & 241-2; also Sümer, 1965:88-9, Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:364, Yınanç, 1944:40-4 & Sevim, 1990b:2-3].

The Türkmen began their Anatolian campaigns by raiding the Armenian kingdom of Ani and Georgia with the Shaddadid dynasty. The Byzantines, who had pursued a policy of annexation in eastern Anatolia since the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, sent an army to Ani and another against the Shaddadids (1045). Tuğrul Beg responded by dispatching Kutalmış with Yabgu Kalan's son Hasan and Çağrı Beg's son Yakuti. Kutalmış defeated a Byzantine army under the command of the Georgian Prince Liparit near Erzurum (1046). These assignments appear to have been supported by a redirection of other Türkmen to Azarbayjan. Apart from those who had threatened to sack Nishapur (1047), there was also a large group from Transoxania who had offered Ibrahim Yinal their services (1048). When Hasan and Yakuti tried to expand the Türkmen raids southward, they were met by a Byzantine army commanded by Katakalon and Aaron; Hasan was

killed (1047/8). Consequently, Tuğrul Beg appointed Ibrahim Yinal governor of Azarbayjan and assigned Kutalmış to him (1048). By now the regions immediately south of the Caspian Sea, Dailam and Jibal had been incorporated fully into the Seljuk realms and Ibrahim Yinal's name was being read after Tuğrul Beg's in the khutba. Ibrahim Yinal defeated Prince Liparit had reinforced another Byzantine army under Katakalon and Aaron, which had been reinforced by Prince Liparit, at Hasan-Kale, on the plain of Pasin near Erzurum (September 1048). Prince Liparit is said to have been among the tens of thousands of prisoners of war Ibrahim Yinal sent to Tuğrul Beg in Rayy. It is not clear whether Emperor Constantine Monomachus or Tuğrul Beg then sued for peace. Nonetheless, this seems to have fallen through when Tuğrul Beg demanded an annual tribute once paid to the Abbasids (1050). However, Constantine Monomachus agreed to repair the mosque in Istanbul (Constantinople) and to have the khutba read in Tuğrul Beg's name [Köymen, 1963:163, 232 & 245-8; also Sümer, 1965:88-89 & 95, Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:364-5, Yınanç, 1944:45-8, Sevim, 1990b:3-4 & Turan, 1965:79-85].

Ibrahim Yinal now became the most renowned commander in Iraq al-Ajam, Azarbayjan and eastern Anatolia. Although he had conquered Rayy, Tuğrul Beg had taken the city for his capital. When Tuğrul Beg asked also for Hamadan and the fortresses he had conquered in Iraq al-Ajam, Ibrahim Yinal refused. Said to have held his vizier responsible for Tuğrul Beg's request, he left to gather his forces after he had him tortured. Although Tuğrul Beg defeated Ibrahim Yinal, who retired to the fortress of Sarmaj, he is said to have pardoned him. Offered to stay with him or take up tenure of

his share of the Seljukid realms, Ibrahim Yinal chose to remain with Tuğrul Beg, which is taken to suggest that he felt penitent for having taken up arms [Köymen, 1963:59].<sup>17</sup>

Tuğrul Beg is assumed to have spent the next four years consolidating his conquests in Iraq al-Ajam. Toward the end of 1054 he once again took command of the raids into Anatolia and incorporated most of the rulers in eastern Anatolia as vassals, namely the Rawwadid, Shaddadid and Marwanid dynasties. Having failed to take the fortress of Malazgirt (Manzikert) near Lake Van despite help from the Armenians, however, he advanced deep into eastern Anatolia where he annihilated a Byzantine army commanded by Gagik. On the invitation of Caliph al-Qa'im, Tuğrul Beg left for Baghdad (1055), assigning Yakuti to co-ordinate the raids into Anatolia from Azarbayjan [Köymen, 1963:248-51; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:366, Yinanç, 1944:49-50 & Sevim, 1990b:14].

### *3.5 Ruler of the East and the West*

When Caliph al-Qa'im had sent his chief judge al-Mawardi as his envoy to Tuğrul Beg at the very least he had recognized the Seljuks' sovereignty over the Türkmen (1043/4). The envoy's task is thought to have been the establishment of peaceful relations between the Seljuks and the Buyids. On receiving Tuğrul Beg's envoy in return, Caliph al-Qa'im had given him a diploma recognizing the Seljuks' sovereignty over Khurasan (1046/7). This is what the Seljuks had requested six years earlier, after Dandankan. That

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<sup>17</sup> In this context there is the as yet unresolved issue of whether or not Kutalmış joined Ibrahim Yinal. According to Yinanç [1944:49-50], when Ibrahim Yinal was defeated, Kutalmış fled to eastern Anatolia and laid siege to Kars. If this is true, then Kutalmış also appears to have been forgiven since he is known to have entered Baghdad with Tuğrul Beg.



same year the Buyid ruler, Abu Kalijar, married his daughter to 'Tuğrul Beg and took one of Çağrı Beg's daughters for his son, Mansur. When Kalijar died the following year, however, the Buyids began to war among themselves. One of their members, Khusraw, took refuge with 'Tuğrul Beg and married a Seljuk princess. It is at this juncture that the Buyids' Turkic commander responsible for public order in Baghdad and its environs, Arslan al-Basasiri, began to gain influence, such that the khutba came to be read in his name throughout Lower Mesopotamia (1050). After Tuğrul Beg sent his own envoy to the caliph with gifts and money (1052), the caliph appears to have declared the Fatimid caliphs heretics (1052/3) [Köymen, 1963:168-9 & 172; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:366 & Kitapçı, 1994:21]

Matters appear to have come to a head when the Uqailids took the city of Enbar, which was under al-Basasiri's command, and secretly sent two envoys to the caliph (November/December 1054). When the caliph's vizier prevented al-Basasiri from arresting them, al-Basasiri is said to have accused him not only of keeping in touch with the Seljuks but also encouraging them to come to Baghdad. Nevertheless, al-Basasiri does not appear to have been in a strong position. He is thought to have turned to the Fatimids in Egypt because he did not have the full support of the Buyids' Turkic soldiery. Perhaps more to the point, however, when al-Basasiri took back Enbar, his soldiery in Baghdad was attacked and his personal wealth plundered (November 1055). Although Caliph al-Qa'im is said to have requested that al-Basasiri be withdrawn from Baghdad, his withdrawal appears to have had more to do with the Buyid ruler al-Malik al-Rahim's proclamation of allegiance to the Seljuks while in Baghdad. Ironically this seems to have prompted most of al-Malik al-Rahim's Turkic soldiery to defect to al-Basasiri [*Ibid.* 169-73; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:366 & Kitapçı, 1994:21].

Tuğrul Beg entered Baghdad against this backdrop (December 25, 1055), at the head of a 60,000 strong force that included eight war elephants. The reputed size of his forces is taken to indicate that the Seljuks did not expect a warm welcome. When the following day a soldier tried to buy some straw for his horse, he is thought to have been misunderstood because he did not speak Arabic. Thinking instead he wanted to appropriate the bales free of charge, a crowd soon formed and then began to attack the Seljuk troops billeted in their houses and those of the Turkic garrison. Interestingly enough, initially the Shi'ite members of the public are said to have tried to protect the Seljuk forces. Be that as it may, when some of the Buyids' remaining Turkic soldiery joined the rioting, matters appear to have become ugly. The rioters and the Turkic soldiery supporting them camped outside Baghdad, hoping the Buyid soldiery would join them. When the Seljuks regained control many inhabitants were enslaved and part of Baghdad sacked. Moreover, Tuğrul Beg is said to have blamed the rioting on the Buyids, using Caliph al-Qa'im to trick al-Malik al-Rahim into captivity [*Ibid.* 175-7; also Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:366, Sümer, 1965:89-90 & Turan, 1965:92-3].

Now fully in charge, Tuğrul Beg seized the treasury, minted money and appointed his own commander to ensure public order in Baghdad, increasing the caliph and his council's annual allowances. Caliph al-Qa'im also married Çağrı Beg's daughter, Khadija Arslan Khatun. Finally, Tuğrul Beg had a palace built on the outskirts of Baghdad, with villas for his commanders and barracks for their soldiery, thus ending the disturbances that ensued from having his troops quartered with the inhabitants. Meanwhile, al-Basasiri had been adding to his soldiery with the help of the Fatimids. When he defeated Kutalmış at the head of a Türkmen force near Mosul (December 1056), Tuğrul Beg advanced with Ibrahim Yinal and Yakuti. Al-Basasiri withdrew to Syria.

After a number of minor conquests and proclamations of allegiance, Tuğrul Beg appointed Ibrahim Yinal to Mosul and its environs, giving him the requisite robes of honour and 20,000 dinars. On his return to Baghdad, Tuğrul Beg was crowned by Caliph al-Qa'im who proclaimed him *Ruler of the East and the West*, a title not decreed before but one in accord with Turkic ideology (January 1058). Turkish historians take this as confirmation that Sultan Tuğrul now had sole sovereignty over worldly matters in Sunni Islamdom [*Ibid.* 59, 177-80 & 1976:102; also Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:366-7, Sümer, 1965:90 & Turan, 1965:93-5].

### ***3.6 Seljukid Discord***

While Tuğrul Beg was thus occupied, Kutalmış's brother Resul-Tekin is said to have rebelled, though it is not clear where (1057). More importantly, a rumour spread that Ibrahim Yinal was preparing to revolt. Having defeated Resul-Tekin, Sultan Tuğrul sent Ibrahim Yinal robes of honour and gifts, inviting him to Baghdad (April 1058). While Ibrahim Yinal was in Baghdad, however, the caliph's vizier approached the sultan who assured him that although Ibrahim Yinal had been forgiven once, he would not be if he rebelled again. The caliph's vizier then informed Ibrahim Yinal of Caliph al-Qa'im's goodwill and satisfaction concerning his allegiance. Although no reason is given for the caliphate's involvement in this affair, there is the caliph's reported reluctance to allow Sultan Tuğrul to take the field against al-Basasiri. In view of later events, the caliph appears to have been right to fear for his safety in the sultan's absence. On the caliph's suggestion, therefore, Sultan Tuğrul entrusted Ibrahim Yinal to deal with al-Basasiri who had continued to gain ground in Upper Mesopotamia. Back in Mosul, Ibrahim Yinal sent an envoy to al-Basasiri. Under the guise of inviting him to proclaim his

allegiance to the sultan, he is said to have secretly requested money, robes of honour, titles and a banner from the Fatimid caliphate, which were granted (August 1058). In exchange Ibrahim Yinal promised to have the Shi'ite khutba proclaimed throughout his realms once he had dethroned Sultan Tuğrul. When he learned that Sultan Tuğrul had been alerted and was advancing on Mosul, Ibrahim Yinal left for Hamadan. Sultan Tuğrul sent his wife and vizier back to Baghdad, hurrying to head off Ibrahim Yinal [Köymen, 1963:60-1; also Sümer, 1965:90, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:367, Yınanç, 1944:52 & Turan, 1965:95-6].

The sultan is said to have reached Hamadan first (November 23, 1058), preventing the money, weapons and supplies stocked there from falling into Ibrahim Yinal's hands. Although the region was his stronghold, Ibrahim Yinal had to promise the Türkmen he would never make peace with the sultan, or force them to campaign in Iraq al-Arab, or appoint a vizier without consulting them. Initially defeated, Sultan Tuğrul returned to Hamadan (December 10, 1058), from where he sent word to his wife and vizier. During the three months or so the sultan was confined, his vizier is said to have attempted to crown his wife Altuncan Khatun's son. This is thought to indicate that he did not hold out much hope for Sultan Tuğrul's chances. Despite the caliph's objection, the khatun took the Seljukid treasury and soldieries in Baghdad to relieve her husband while Kunduri remained behind. When Ibrahim Yinal learnt of her approach he sent a force to have her intercepted. In the hope of gaining plunder, other Türkmen are said to have joined in, such that the sultan was able to make a sortie. Having defeated Ibrahim Yinal's remaining forces he retired to Rayy where the khatun, who had managed to disengage herself from the Türkmen by leaving her personal baggage train behind, joined him. After this setback, Ibrahim Yinal requested help from his nephews

Muhammad and Ahmad who reportedly turned up with some 30,000 men, their father Er-Taş having died in 1048/9. The sultan advanced with the reinforcements his wife had brought. Ibrahim Yinal once again defeated him, but when Çağrı Beg's sons, Kavurt, Yakuti and Alp-Arslan joined Sultan Tuğrul, Ibrahim Yinal lost the battle outside Rayy and was captured (July 1059). In accordance with Turkic custom, the sultan had Ibrahim Yinal strangled with his own bowstring. Muhammad and Ahmad were also killed. Meanwhile, al-Basasiri took Mosul and then Baghdad, sacked the caliph's palace and placed him in captivity elsewhere while he embarked on the conquest of Basra. However, he withdrew on learning that Sultan Tuğrul was approaching Baghdad. The caliph was released voluntarily by his captor and the sultan set off after al-Basasiri, whom he defeated and had killed (January 1060) [Köymen, 1976:62-3 & 67-70 and 1963:61-2; also Sümer, 1965:90-1, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:367 & Turan, 1965:97-8].

It appears that Kutalmış and his brother Resul-Tekin had sided with Ibrahim Yinal. Consequently, Sultan Tuğrul is thought to have next dispatched an army against them. Kutalmış and Resul-Tekin withdrew to the fortress of Girdkuh, near Damghan, from where they repulsed Sultan Tuğrul's forces (April-May 1061). With the help of the deceased Ibrahim Yinal's Türkmén, Kutalmış and his brother also repulsed a subsequent attempt (August 1061). Sultan Tuğrul, however, appears to have been more concerned with strengthening the Seljuks' ties to the caliphate [Köymen, 1963:62-4; also Sümer, 1965:92, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:367-8 & Turan, 1965:98-100].

Sultan Tuğrul had secured the caliph's wife Arslan Khatun's release from captivity before attempting to have the caliph freed. When the caliph's wife sent an envoy to request that Arslan Khatun return to Baghdad, Sultan Tuğrul dispatched the chief jurist

for Rayy with a request to marry the caliph's daughter. Although at first Caliph al-Qa'im is said to have refused, eventually he accepted on condition that the sultan resided in Baghdad, having handed over Wasit, 300,000 dinars in compensation and the deceased Altuncan Khatun's real estate. By the time Arslan Khatun returned to Baghdad with Kunduri to finalise the arrangements (April 1061), however, the caliph appears to have had a change of mind. In subsequent discussions, first with Arslan Khatun and then Kunduri, Caliph al-Qa'im is said to have threatened to leave Baghdad if the sultan insisted. As a result Kunduri is thought to have made preparations to leave Baghdad, prompting the chief jurist for Baghdad and a member of the caliph's retinue to warn the caliph of the dangers of refusing the sultan's request. Although apparently persuaded by them to go through with the marriage, the Hanafi and Shafi'i jurists in Baghdad now issued a fatwa against the marriage. The caliph once again changed his mind and Kunduri left Baghdad (July 17, 1061). When Sultan Tuğrul instructed the governor of Iraq to confiscate his iqta's, the caliph changed his mind one last time and sent an envoy to Rayy, accepting to marry his daughter to the sultan as requested (August 22, 1062). The marriage ceremony took place in Baghdad (February 17, 1063). Despite her protests, Sultan Tuğrul is said to have taken his new wife with him on leaving Baghdad with the caliph's permission (April 13, 1063). Kunduri once again laid siege to Girdkuh (May 1063), but the sultan died soon afterwards (September 1063) [Köymen, 1963:190-3; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:367-8 & Turan, 1965:101-2].

### ***3.7 Summary***

Divitçioğlu proposed that Selçuk Beg's father Dukak had been in the service of the Khazar kagan's regent, the Hakan-beh. Togan thought the Oguz yabgu was the Hakan-

beh. Sümer, Kafesoğlu, Köymen and Turan thought the Seljuks' legend of origin concerned the Oguz yabgu. Although Divitçioğlu did not commit himself, Togan proposed that the Seljuks were of humble origin. Köymen concluded that they must have been freemen. Kafesoğlu and Turan, on the other hand, thought that the Seljuks were of noble origin, the latter basing his argument on the similarity of Selçuk Beg's position to that of the Khazar Hakan-beh, a post he thought was hereditary [1965:40-1].

Turan and Kafesoğlu argued that the Seljuks' conquests and the subsequent influx of Türkmen were precipitated by overcrowding on the Eurasian steppes [*Ibid.* 72ff; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff]. While Turan justified his conclusion with reference to the Kimek (Kuman/Kıpçak) migration from Inner Asia, which is accepted to have been precipitated by Khitay expansion, Kafesoğlu offered shortage of pasturage, that is, overpopulation among the Oguz. Turan and Kafesoğlu agreed that the Türkmen who could not be situated in Iraq had been encouraged to migrate to Anatolia, because not only was it ecologically more suited but also this prepared it for annexation. The reasoning appears to stem from Yınanç's proposition that Çağrı Beg had made an 'exploratory raid' to Anatolia. Both accepted further that the Seljuks' other subjects suffered repeated pillages at the hands of the 'homeless' Türkmen, but without specifying why.

Sümer and Köymen on the other hand explained the Türkmen migration to Anatolia without reference to overcrowding. Although both also accepted without explanation that the pillaging of Muslims was a factor, they argued that some of the Türkmen came to be excluded right from the outset, because the Seljuks had accepted institutions already existent in Iran, especially the mamluk system [Sümer, 1965:87 & 94-9; Köymen,

1963:158-67; also Togan, 1946:193-5]. Kafesoğlu agreed [1953 & IA Vol. 10:353ff], but Turan went out of his way to criticise Sümer for having followed Togan, to whom he attributed this conclusion [1965:75]. According to Turan, the Seljuks were honour-bound to find the Türkmen a home in keeping with the ideological tenet according to which the Seljuk dynasty had apportioned their conquests [*Ibid.* 72]. This ignores the fact that Sümer also agreed that the Seljuks not only directed but also led the Türkmen westward into Anatolia [1965:99-120].

Last but not least, there is also the Turkish scholars' view of Tuğrul Beg's investiture by Caliph al-Qa'im as *the Ruler of the East and the West* to consider. Kafesoğlu interpreted this on the one hand as the Seljuks' assumption of the defence of Islamdom against Shi'ism and on the other as the Abbasid Caliphate's abdication from worldly affairs [IA Vol. 10:366-7]. Turan was of the opinion that the caliph applied to the Seljuks for help against the Shi'ite Buyids. He also claimed that Tuğrul Beg asked permission to come to Baghdad in order to be elevated to the task of opening the hajj routes and fighting the Fatimids. Accordingly, the caliph declared Tuğrul Beg sultan once Iraq al-Arab had been cleared of Shi'ites, [1965:90-1 & 94-5]. By comparison, Köymen argued that although Caliph al-Qa'im thought he could use the Seljuks to free himself of Buyid oppression, from the outset Tuğrul Beg behaved like a conqueror rather than his protector. As a result the caliph was forced to declare Tuğrul Beg sultan and forgo all claims to political power [1963:168ff].

In short, while Turkish scholars accepted that the Seljuks were of the Kınık, they were not agreed that Dukak was of noble birth, or that Selçuk Beg had been the Oguz yabgu's Commander-in-Chief. Likewise, although they concurred that the Seljuks had conquered Khurasan and then Iraq with the Türkmen, and that they had led rather than



followed the Türkmen into Anatolia, they were not agreed on either the causes or the consequences of their conquests.

## 4. EMPIRE

This chapter follows Köymen's *Alp-Arslan ve Zamanı* (1972) for Sultan Alp-Arslan's reign and Kafesoğlu's *Sultan Melikşah Devrinde Büyük Selçuklu İmparatorluğu* (1953) for Sultan Malik-Shah's reign. Although Köymen mentions that Kafesoğlu's work needed to be updated in light of new material that had emerged since its publication [Köymen, 1979:12\*], this has not happened. Kafesoğlu's work is augmented with Merçil's *Kirman Selçukluları* (1980), Turan's *Selçuklular Zamanında Türkiye* (1971) and Sevim's *Suriye Selçukluları I – Fetihden Tutuş'un Ölümüne Kadar* (1965) for Kirman, Anatolia, and Syria and Palestine respectively. As in the previous chapter, references to other works are for supplementary material pertinent to the events being reviewed.

### ***4.1 Unification of the Great Seljuk Empire***

A fortnight after learning of Sultan Tuğrul's death, Caliph al-Qa'im invited the Seljuk's Arab and Kurdish vassals, ostensibly to discuss the future of the region. The Seljuk representative in Baghdad, Sa'id Qa'ini, seems to have protested, but apologized and accepted the caliph's demands on learning that both Kutalmış and Alp-Arslan had refused to recognize Süleyman as sultan. Having dropped Sultan Tuğrul's name from the khutba (September 17, 1063), however, the caliph sent an envoy to Qa'ini demanding that he return his iqta's and depart. Concurrent with these demands, the

caliph replaced with his own officials that had been appointed to his diwan by Sultan Tuğrul and lifted non-Shari taxes. Presumably to legitimize his actions, the caliph asked the jurists in Baghdad for a fatwa concerning conduct in the face of disobedience and rebellion. They complied by ruling that the caliph should wage war against those culpable [Köymen, 1972:11-2 & 96-100].

The collapse of Seljuk authority in Iraq al-Arab did not enable the caliph to regain dominion; quite to the contrary. Invited to drive out the Seljuk forces in the region, the Arab and Kurdish rulers began to try to improve their situation at each other's expense, the Uqailid Muslim going so far as to pillage the caliph's palace. When the caliph appointed a commander to lead a force gathered from the other rulers, Muslim apologized and withdrew after receiving additional lands (December 25, 1063). More likely, however, given that this date coincides with news of Alp-Arslan's victory over Kutalmış, the Uqailid Muslim thought it best to vacate the Seljuk palace in Baghdad where he had taken up residence and withdraw. Be that as it may, during this period Seljuk dominion in Iraq al-Ajam does not appear to have fared any better. In Hamadan, for instance, the inhabitants are known to have attacked the Seljuk officials, killing them and 700 of their men [*Ibid.* 12 & 100-1].

Clearly the three-month period of uncertainty from Sultan Tuğrul's death to Sultan Alp-Arslan's accession did not aid matters. Süleyman was the youngest of Çağrı Beg's sons. It is thought that since Sultan Tuğrul was childless, on the instigation of Çağrı Beg's wife, whom he had married when his brother died, Süleyman had been appointed heir apparent with Kunduri's support. According to Köymen, Kunduri may have wanted to become the de facto ruler of the Great Seljuk Empire. If so, he appears to have failed at the first hurdle. On Süleyman's being declared heir apparent, one of his mamluk

commanders, Erdem, had left to join Alp-Arslan. Now another, Yağ-Sıyan, also left. He and Erdem then had the khutba in Qazvin read in Alp-Arslan's name. The vizier is said to have distributed 700,000 dinars and 16,000 suits of armour worth 200,000 dinars among the remaining soldiery. Having received their allegiance to Süleyman, Kunduri sent Alp-Arslan a letter stating that he was merely executing the sultan's will and would not hesitate to take up arms if challenged, advising him to make do with his father's inheritance [*Ibid.* 14-5].

When Kutalmış arrived in Sawa, however, some of the mamluk commanders are said to have accepted his invitation to join him. Encouraged by them to attack Rayy, Kutalmış advanced at the head of 50,000 Türkmen and irregulars that raped and pillaged in the surrounding countryside. Arriving outside Rayy (November 16, 1063), Kutalmış defeated Kunduri's advance guard under the command of Inanç Beg, capturing him with 500 mamluks. Now besieged in Rayy, the vizier appears to have sent an envoy to Alp-Arslan, proclaiming his allegiance and seeking help. On news of Alp-Arslan's advance units' arrival in Damghan (November 24-25, 1063), Kutalmış is said to have attacked, forcing Erdem to seek refuge in a nearby village. Despite having flooded the valley below the village to hinder Alp-Arslan, Kutalmış lost the ensuing battle and died in flight after falling off his horse (December 7, 1063). On receiving news that Alp-Arslan was on his way to Rayy (December 25, 1063), Süleyman seems to have gone to Shiraz where Kara-Arslan Kavurt had the khutba read in his nephew's name [*Ibid.* 16-7 & 82-5].

Alp-Arslan does not appear to have been in any hurry to gain an audience with the caliph, embarking instead on a campaign into the Caucasus (February 22, 1064). He sent an envoy requesting that the khutba be read in his name (March 6, 1064), which was

effected sometime later (May 11, 1064). Coins were struck in Sultan Alp-Arslan's name and although the caliph once again decreed temporal affairs to be in the domain of the Seljuk sultan, he appears to have continued to resist Seljuk dominion. Prior to the arrival of the sultan's envoy, the governor of Iraq, Nihavandi had sent a deputy to Baghdad who is thought to have been unsuccessful in re-establishing Seljukid authority. Some time afterwards, when Nihavandi took up residence in Baghdad with his shihna (the commander responsible for enforcing official decisions such as by a jurist or tax collector), Ay-Tekin, the caliph's vizier objected that Seljuk officials were interfering with the administration and taxation of iqta's. Nihavandi is said to have complained to the caliph, but al-Qa'im supported his vizier. As a result Nihavandi confiscated the vizier and his officials' iqta's. This seems to have had the desired effect in that the caliph is said to have appealed to Nizam al-Mulk, Alp-Arslan's vizier in Khurasan. Although reprimanded, Nihavandi does not appear to have taken much notice since at this time Kunduri was still the sultan's vizier. He is not reported to have returned the iqta's until after news of Sultan Alp-Arslan's conquest of Ani reached Baghdad (September-October 1064). When soon afterwards Nizam al-Mulk replaced Kunduri (December 29, 1064), he is known to have replaced Nihavandi with Sa'id Fasi on a three-year tenure in exchange for 500,000 dinars, which suggests Nihavandi may have continued to experience problems collecting taxes. Whatever the case, the caliph is also known to have dismissed his vizier on grounds that he received robes of honour from the sultan without his permission, taking care to blame him also for inviting the Uqailid Muslim to Baghdad. When Sultan Alp-Arslan insisted that he appoint al-Ala as his vizier, however, the caliph restored him to his post. The sultan later sent al-Ala to Baghdad as his deputy, decreeing half of the caliph's vizier's iqta's to him (December 1071) [*Ibid.* 19, 35 & 103-6].

## *4.2 The Caucasus and Transoxania*

During Tuğrul Beg's reign as sultan, Türkmen chieftains such as Dinar, Kapar, Cemcem, Tuğ-Tekin and Salar-i Khurasan continued to raid eastern Anatolia. The key event appears to have been Yakuti's defeat of the Byzantine forces under the command of Briennios with the Türkmen Sabuk Beg (1057). This enabled a second force to besiege Kars and Ani before joining a third and raiding as far as Erzincan while a fourth under Dinar sacked Malatya (Melitene) (1058). The following year, on Sultan Tuğrul's orders the Türkmen once again entered Anatolia under Yakuti's direction. Salar-i Khurasan failed to take Urfa (Edessa), but Sabuk Beg sacked Sivas (Sebasteia) (1060). The year following that a Byzantine army under Pankaras was defeated (1061). Sultan Tuğrul's reported visit to Azarbayjan to review Yakuti's conduct of operations indicates that the raids on Anatolia were being conducted on his orders (1062) [Sevim, 1990b:5-6; Turan, 1965:109].

Yakuti appears to have died the same year as Sultan Tuğrul, because on his arrival in Azarbayjan Sultan Alp-Arslan is said to have divided his forces into two on Tuğ-Tekin's advice (February 1064). The sultan entered Georgia at the head of one and having conquered the region south-west of Tbilisi (Tiflis) turned back toward Kars, in north-eastern Anatolia (July 1064). Next he advanced on the Armenian kingdom of Lori, which proclaimed its allegiance. The second force under the command of his nine-year-old son Malik-Shah, who was supported by Nizam al-Mulk, took the fortresses situated along the Aras River south of Kars. When they rejoined him, Sultan Alp-Arslan continued to sack the fortified towns in his path and devastate the countryside, finally laying siege to Ani. When the city fell it too was pillaged without remorse and torched. Lastly, the sultan is said to have assigned the government of the realms he conquered to

his commanders (August 1064) [Köymen, 1972:24-34; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:368 & 1953:9-12, Turan, 1965:110-13, Sevim, 1990b:7-8 & Yınanç, 1944:57-9].

Having thus secured Azarbayjan and Armenia for the raids on Anatolia, Sultan Alp-Arslan appears to have returned to Khurasan to put down the ageing Yabgu Kalan's or his son's revolt in Heart. There is mention also of a campaign elsewhere in Khurasan against two vassals who had rebelled. Both their lands are said to have been incorporated. While in Marv Sultan Alp-Arslan married his son Malik-Shah with a Karakhanid princess, the niece of the ruler of Samarkand, and apportioned the now united Seljuk realms among remaining members of the dynasty. He assigned Balkh, Khwarazm, and Tukharistan and Chaganiyan to his brothers Süleyman, Arslan-Argun and Ilyas. His sons Arslan-Shah and Togan-Shah were assigned Marv and Herat. Er-Taş's remaining sons Mawdud and Mas'ud were assigned Bagshur and Isfizar. Finally, Inaç or Inanç yabgu (possibly Musa's son or his regent) was assigned Mazandaran. Although Sultan Alp-Arslan's sons Ayaz and Isma'il are not mentioned either, the absence of Yakuti's name seems to confirm his death. From Marv Sultan Alp-Arslan seems to have gone first to Khwarazm, where the Türkmen are said to have been raiding passing caravans with the Kıpçak. When the men took refuge on an island, the sultan took their women and children prisoner, confiscated their livestock, and subordinated the Kıpçak chieftain responsible. Moving on to Jand, he is said to have visited his grandfather's tomb, also receiving the allegiance of its Kıpçak ruler (April 1066). On his return to Marv, the sultan appointed Malik-Shah heir apparent (May 1066) [Köymen, 1972:75-8, 83-4 & 90; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:368 and 1953:12-5 & 15 and Turan, 1965:113-6].

While the sultan was thus occupied in Khurasan, his eldest brother Kara-Arslan Kavurt appears to have dropped Alp-Arslan's name from the khutba with his vizier's encouragement, having coins minted in his own name. This is taken to suggest that his intentions were limited to establishing an independent polity rather than to challenge his brother for the Seljuk throne. Just prior to Sultan Tuğrul's death, Kavurt had taken Fars in south Iran from the Buyids' former vassal, the Shebankarid dynasty (1062). When the head of the dynasty proclaimed his allegiance to Sultan Alp-Arslan in person, Kavurt is thought to have been ordered to return Fars. The consensus among Turkish scholars is that the sultan had in mind to reduce Kavurt's realm because he had advanced as far as Isfahan on Sultan Tuğrul's death, withdrawing after Sultan Alp-Arslan's victory over Kutalmış. While Sultan Alp-Arslan was in Azarbayjan the Shebankarids had attacked Shiraz, but Kavurt had defeated them (1064). On being informed of this by the Shebankarids' ruler, Sultan Alp-Arslan had advanced on Shiraz (January 1065). Kavurt had sent his treasury and family back to Kirman, withdrawing to a fortress by the sea. Although their forces had skirmished, Sultan Alp-Arslan had not pursued the issue and Kavurt had withdrawn from Fars. This time, however, the sultan marched on Kirman via Isfahan (June/July 1067). When his advance units were defeated and fled the fortified city of Bardasir where he had taken up position, Kavurt sent an envoy proclaiming his allegiance and asked to be forgiven. Sultan Alp-Arslan received him at court and reinstated him. Matters did not end there, however, for Kavurt now changed tactics. Having made an alliance with the Shebankarids, he ensconced himself in one of their fortresses. Sultan Alp-Arslan again advanced from Isfahan (October 1068). When he arrived in Shiraz the Shebankarid ruler's brother asked to be entrusted with the conquest of the fortresses in Fars. Instead, Sultan Alp-Arslan appointed his vizier Nizam al-Mulk to the task and marched on Kirman to besiege Bardasir, where Kavurt



had withdrawn upon the falling out among the Shebankarids. On learning that Nizam al-Mulk had captured his ally, once again Kavurt sent an envoy to proclaim his allegiance and asked to be forgiven. As it turned out, however, while besieged Kavurt had gained the allegiance of the sultan's soldiery. The commanders were killed and having left Malik-Shah with a small force in Bardasir the sultan hurriedly evacuated Kirman (October 1069) [Merçil, 1980:32-43; Köymen, 1963:65-8 & 1972:85-7; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff; Turan, 1965:116].

After Sultan Alp-Arslan had withdrawn he is said to have received a letter of allegiance from Kavurt's son Sultan-Shah who was asked to come to court. Once there Sultan-Shah appears to have offered to take Kirman from his father with the sultan's aid. The sultan seems to have agreed, entrusting him with thousands of Turkic mamluks and Türkmen. Kavurt, however, defeated his son and the sultan's attempts to tighten his grip on Kirman failed (1070) [Merçil, 1980:43-4; Köymen, 1963:68 & 1972:88-9].

#### ***4.3 The War for Anatolia***

The Byzantine Empire had recovered from earlier losses of territory under the Macedonian dynasty founded by Basil I (867-886). At the end of Basil II's reign (976-1025) its domains stretched from the Alps to the Caucasus and included southern Italy. However, possibly never as developed as along its shores and to the west, central and eastern Anatolia had been devastated by warfare with the Iranians and then the Arabs, its depleted regions being resettled from time to time with Slavs, Bulgars, and

Armenians.<sup>18</sup> Quite apart from any cultural disjunction this may have introduced,<sup>19</sup> Basil II's reliance on a new group of families only loyal to him seems to have encouraged the concentration of land-ownership in fewer and fewer hands, including that of the church. The old military aristocracy's loss of power coincided with attacks from the Uz and the Peçenek in the Balkans, the Normans in Italy and the Seljuks in Anatolia, their replacement by civilian administrators coming to a head during the reign of Constantine IX Monomachus (1042-55). Although many generals rebelled, these were suppressed (1041-7), further weakening the local populace's ability and will to fight for the Byzantines.<sup>20</sup> When Romanos Diogenes, who had been successful against the Peçeneks in the Balkans, became emperor through marriage to the Empress Eudoxia (January 1068), the once mighty Byzantine military capability had fallen into a perilous state. In particular the forces stationed in Anatolia seem to have been reduced to plundering in order to clothe and feed themselves. Said to have been unable to undertake any fundamental changes due to the empress' firm grip on the administration, Romanos IV Diogenes crossed into Anatolia now under pressure from the north, east and south [Sevim, 1990b:13-5 & 21; Yınanç, 1944:62; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 7:242ff & 1953:77; Cahen, 1984:79-80; see also Karolidis, 1993:17-9 & 37-41].

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<sup>18</sup> During the Byzantine incorporation of Armenia (1020-2), reportedly 40,000 people were resettled forcibly in central Anatolia, namely Sivas and also Kayseri [Sevim, 1983:7-10].

<sup>19</sup> Particularly in view of the persecution of leading Armenian families and the Gregorian Church during the reign of Constantine IX Monomachus [Sevim, 1983:13-4].

<sup>20</sup> Such as the Ducas in Bythnia, the Comnenus in Paphlagonia, the Dalassenos in Armeniakon, the Diogenes in Harisanda, the Botaniates in Anatolik and the Phocas in Cappadocia, all of whom had private armies [Kafesoğlu, 1953:77, footnote 58].

After his campaign in the Caucasus, Sultan Alp-Arslan had appointed Gümüş-Tekin to lead the raids into Anatolia (1066). He and the Türkmen beg Bekçioğlu Afşin<sup>21</sup> set off from Ahlat on the north-western shore of Lake Van, taking many small fortresses situated between the Murat and Tigris rivers before Afşin extended his raids towards the Euphrates where he defeated and captured the Byzantine general Aruandanos whom he ransomed for 40,000 gold pieces. When they returned to Ahlat Afşin is said to have killed Gümüş-Tekin for previously killing his brother. Possibly afraid of Sultan Alp-Arslan's wrath, Afşin returned to Anatolia (August 1067), sacking Kayseri (Cæsarea) and raiding as far as Konya (Iconium) before withdrawing to Aleppo. A Byzantine force sent out under the command of Botaniates dispersed without engaging him. The following year, as Romanos Diogenes prepared his army, Afşin laid siege to Antakya (April 1068), but on receiving the sultan's pardon, raised the siege in exchange for 100,000 gold pieces and war materials. At the same time Sultan Alp-Arslan entered Georgia with Nizam al-Mulk and his senior commander, the eunuch Sav-Tekin, in order to secure the region. Under pressure from the Kimek (Kıpçak/Kuman) migration, the Alan, Komuk, Sabir and various remnants of the Khazars had been pushed toward the Caucasus. The sultan's campaign, however, may have proved only partially successful. The Karakhanid ruler's death and Kavurt's attempt to break free forced him to turn back [Köymen, 1972:40-2; also Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 7:242ff, Turan, 1965:116-21, Sevim, 1990b:19-22 and Yınanç, 1944:62-5].

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<sup>21</sup> Both *Afşin* and *İhyd* are considered to be the titles of dynastic leaders in pre-Islamic Transoxania [Barthold, *IA* Vol. 1:146]. As such these appear to have been appropriated by or given to Turkic chieftains who accepted Islam. One such Turkic Afşin is thought to have suppressed an uprising in Azarbayjan as early as 830 [Cahen, 1984:26]. Interestingly enough, *bekçi* means guard or sentry; thus *Bekçioğlu* is the *son of a sentry* and, therefore, possibly denotes descent from a Central Asian marchlord.

Possibly encouraged by Afşin's siege of Antakya, a group of Türkmen thought to have been able to field between 500-1000 men affiliated to a certain Harun<sup>22</sup> took two Byzantine fortifications toward Antakya with the support of Arab contingents (July 1068). Harun appears to have been active between Aleppo and Diyarbakır since 1063, selling his services to the local dynasties, namely the Marwanids in Diyarbakır and the Mirdasids in Aleppo, not to mention the Byzantines. As such Harun seems to have helped the Mirdasid Mahmud take Aleppo from his nephew (1065) [Sevim, 1965:19-28].

The army that Romanos Diogenes had gathered is said to have consisted of Greeks – mainly from his home region of Cappadocia – Macedonians, Bulgars, and those Uz and Peçenek settled in the Balkans, not to mention mercenaries recruited from the Franks, the Germans, the Varank and the Normans. In view of Afşin's devastating raids throughout south-eastern Anatolia the previous year, Romanos Diogenes first moved toward Syria (March 1068). Before he arrived in Kayseri, however, he learnt that Niksar northeast of Kayseri toward the Black Sea, had been sacked. Leaving his army in Sivas under the command of Ducas, Romanos Diogenes advanced on the Türkmen with his best troops. Surprised, the Türkmen are said to have left behind most of their captives and plunder after a fierce battle. The emperor then marched back south to the Euphrates so that Has Inal, who had been raiding in the region, withdrew. The emperor pressed on to Aleppo where he ransacked the countryside. When the Uqailid Mahmud paid him off Romanos Diogenes laid siege to Manbij (Ierapolis), then one of the most important fortifications in northern Syria. Mahmud, however, began to harry and harass the Byzantine reserves around Aleppo with Harun. When the forces sent to rescue

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<sup>22</sup> Referred to in the historical record as *Hanoğlu*, literally the son of a *khan*, Harun is thought to have migrated from Central Asia or further east still, after having fallen out with his father who was possibly of a branch of the ruling Karakhanid dynasty [Yinanç, 1944; Sevim, 1965]

them were routed Romanos Diogenes was forced to return to the environs of Aleppo. Mahmud and Harun managed to encircle him, but he broke out and returned to Manbij (November 20, 1068). Said to have been unable to supply his forces because of the devastation he had inflicted on the environs of Aleppo and afraid that he would be cut off, Romanos Diogenes withdrew toward the Toros Mountains, retaking the fortifications Harun had taken earlier that year. Here he heard that Afşin had penetrated as far west as the Sakarya River, destroying the city of Amorion en route. Although he tried to cut off Afşin's retreat he was unsuccessful. Once he had returned to Istanbul for the winter, he learnt that the Italian Crispino was extorting money on the grounds that local Byzantine administrators were disrespectful. Crispino defeated the forces sent against him under the Bulgarian Alufasianos. When Romanos Diogenes marched on him, however, Crispino surrendered, being pardoned in view of the parlous circumstances in Anatolia [Köymen, 1972:42-3; also Sevim, 1965:24-7 & 1990b:23-4, Yınanç, 1944:65-6, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 7:242ff, Turan, 1965:123ff & Karolidis, 1993:44-9].

Throughout that winter the Türkmen begs, thought to have been Bekçioğlu Afşin, Sabuk, Ahmad-Shah, Uvakoğlu Atsız and his brother Çavlı, Türkman, Demleçoğlu Mehmed, Duduoğlu, Serhenkoğlu, Tavtavoğlu, Tarankoğlu and Arslan-Taş continued to raid south-eastern Anatolia from Aleppo. After Easter, Romanos Diogenes divided his forces into three. Manuel and Philaretos Brachamios were sent to Sivas and Malatya respectively while the emperor marched to Kayseri. There he found that the Türkmen from Ahlat had positioned themselves in the surrounding hills. In the engagement that followed, many of their begs were taken prisoner and killed despite offers of ransom. When Romanos Diogenes advanced to take back the fortresses between the Euphrates

and Tigris rivers, however, Afşin attacked Malatya. Defeated, Philaretos joined the emperor who was still in Harput, immediately to the northeast. Afşin and the Türkmen begs did not lay siege to Malatya. Instead, they raided deep into central Anatolia, sacking Konya. Romanos Diogenes returned to Kayseri to cut off the Türkmen retreat but Afşin crossed the Toros Mountains and retired to Aleppo [Köymen, 1972:43-5; also Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 7:242ff, Turan, 1965:123ff, Sevim, 1990b:24-5, Yınanç, 1944:66-7 & Karolidis, 1993:49-52].

The following year Romanos Diogenes remained in Istanbul given the objections to his so far unsuccessful Anatolian campaigns (1070). Consequently, he is thought to have been pressured to assign Manuel to the defence of Anatolia. Having situated himself in Kayseri, Manuel was forced to move his headquarters to Sivas in view of the Türkmen raids along the Pontic Mountains, which run parallel to the Black Sea. When the Türkmen based in Aleppo entered south-eastern Anatolia, however, Manuel was ordered by Romanos Diogenes to send an army against them. Manuel did not realise these Türkmen were under the command of Sultan Alp-Arslan's brother-in-law Er-Basgan, who had rebelled the previous autumn with Kara-Arslan Kavurt. Manuel engaged them on the banks of the Kızılırmak River between Sivas and Kayseri. Er-Basgan feigned retreat and the Byzantine forces separated in pursuit, severing their communication lines and hence the chain of command. Er-Basgan turned on the Byzantines and captured Manuel along with some of his generals. Afraid of Sultan Alp-Arslan's wrath, Er-Basgan continued westward, raiding along the Toros Mountains. It appears that when Er-Basgan learnt the sultan had sent Afşin in pursuit, Manuel was able to persuade him to seek refuge in Istanbul. By then, Er-Basgan was only a few days ride from Izmir and the Aegean Sea. Afşin, however, did not give up and finally set up

camp in the hills overlooking the Bosphorus. From there he sent an envoy to Romanos Diogenes who declined to hand over Er-Basgan and the Türkmen with him. Whether he went as far as the Bosphorus or not, Afşin returned to Azarbayjan the way he had come, wreaking havoc [Köymen, 1972:45-6; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 7:242ff, Turan, 1965:128-31, Sevim, 1990b:22-4, Yınanç, 1944:68 & Karolidis, 1993:52-4].

#### ***4.4 Victory at Malazgirt***

Romanos IV Diogenes embarked on his last campaign, as Sultan Mas'ud had done, with the intention of taking the fight to the Seljuks (March 13, 1071). In addition to the forces he had already, there were now also mercenaries of Kıpçak, Khazar, Goth, Bulgar, Georgian, Armenian and Rûs origin. The army is thought to have numbered close to 100,000 with the inclusion of some 30,000 infantry and 3,000 supply wagons, not to mention a siege machine that required 1,200 people to operate. While still on the banks of the Sakarya River, however, he appears to have ordered back to Istanbul those generals whom he did not trust, such as the experienced Botaniates. Nonetheless, at a war council held in Sivas, Briennios and those who remained, such as the Georgian Trachaniotes, are said to have tried to change Romanos Diogenes' mind. Accordingly, they argued that it was better to defend Anatolia from Sivas, but if the emperor wanted to engage the Seljuks this would be accomplished best on the Pasin Plain immediately east of Erzurum. With the support of the younger generals, Romanos Diogenes is said to have insisted that the Seljuks, and hence the Türkmen, would be driven back into Transoxania, Byzantine governors general appointed to Khurasan, Iraq al-Ajam and Iraq al-Arab, and mosques replaced with churches [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 7:242ff; Yınanç, 1944:71; Süer & Çakın, 1981:16; Turan, 1971b:21-32 & 1969:132-4; Sevim, 1993:219ff].

Whatever the case, on the way Romanos Diogenes had to put down a rebellion by the Franks. In Erzurum he ordered two months' supplies to be procured, sent Er-Basgan and his son back to Istanbul, lest they desert, and deployed a small force to assist the Bagratid dynasty in their efforts to regain Georgia from the Seljuks. In order not to be out-flanked while he attacked the fortress of Malazgirt, he assigned the Norman commander Roussel (referred to also as Urselio and/or Ruselio) to his rearguard with Trachaniotes, ordering them to advance on Ahlat. Although the commander of Malazgirt surrendered, most of the Seljuk soldiery seem to have been put to the sword [Sevim, 1993:219ff; Dirimtekin, 1993:230ff; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 7:242ff; Yınanç, 1944:71-2; Turan, 1971b:21-32 & 1969:134ff; see also Karolidis, 1993:56-7].

Meanwhile Romanos Diogenes is said to have sent a letter to the sultan, either offering Manbij in return for Ahlat and Malazgirt, or simply demanding these and another fortification. Whatever the content, Sultan Alp-Arslan received the Byzantine envoys outside Aleppo, en route to Egypt at the invitation of the Fatimid vizier. This meeting is thought to have occurred on the very day the sultan was informed of the Byzantine advance and hence his decision to abandon the Egyptian campaign. Although what passed between the Byzantine envoys and the sultan is not known, it is further assumed that Romanos Diogenes gained the impression from them that Sultan Alp-Arslan had withdrawn toward Iraq al-Ajam. This is then taken to explain the deployment of his forces prior to the fall of Malazgirt, which are considered to have been militarily unsound given the sultan's advance [Sevim, 1993:219ff; Dirimtekin, 1993:230ff; Kaymaz, 1993:261; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 7:242ff; Yınanç, 1944:71; Turan, 1965:134ff].

Be that as it may, in view of the difficulty of procuring supplies on the way, or because many of their mounts drowned, Sultan Alp-Arslan is thought to have crossed the



Euphrates with only fifteen to twenty thousand horsemen, of whom four thousand were mamluks (April 27, 1071). Before arriving in Mosul, however, the sultan is assumed to have doubled back toward Urfa and then proceeded north to Ahlat over Diyarbakır and Silvan. Whatever the case, clearly the Byzantines were unaware of the sultan's approach. When Roussel and Trachaniotes were engaged outside Ahlat by its commander Sabuk Beg and withdrew Romanos Diogenes sent a reconnaissance unit under the Armenian Vasilakios(?). Sabuk Beg feigned retreat, then surrounded and captured him. Sent to help, Briennios appears to have been equally unsuccessful although managing to return badly wounded. Vasilakios was taken to Sultan Alp-Arslan's headquarters, thought to have been established 15-20 km east of Malazgirt, in the hills overlooking the Zaho (also Zehve, Zahva or Rahve) Plain (August 23, 1071). In short, Sabuk Beg's engagement and defeat of the various Byzantine units sent to Ahlat seems to have cloaked Sultan Alp-Arslan's manoeuvre around Malazgirt, because Romanos Diogenes then advanced on Ahlat. When he learnt of Sultan Alp-Arslan's true position, however, he is said to have returned, sending word for Roussel and Trachaniotes to join him. If so, they appear to have decided that it was safer to put as much distance as possible between themselves and the Seljuks [Sevim, 1993:219ff; Dirimtekin, 1993:230ff; Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 7:242ff; Süer & Çakın, 1981:17 & 20-1; Turan, 1971b:21-32; Yınanç, 1944:72-3; Köymen, 1972:48-9; see also Karolidis, 1993:57-60].

On the way, Kutalmış's sons Süleyman and Mansur, not to mention the Türkmen begs named in the context of their Anatolian raids, are all thought to have joined Sultan Alp-Arslan. Although this may be probable, it seems unlikely that the Seljuks' forces therefore more than doubled to between forty and fifty-five thousand, inclusive of ten

thousand Kurdish auxiliaries from their vassals in south-eastern Anatolia, not to mention those Uz and Peçenek who deserted to them before the battle. Despite this last, those forces ordered back to Istanbul at various times, the one sent to Georgia and those with Trachaniotes and Roussel, the Byzantine army is still thought to have numbered near on 100,000, which no doubt is equally exaggerated [Sevim, 1993:219ff; Dirimtekin, 1993:230ff; Kafesoğlu, *IA Vol. 7*:242ff; Yınanç, 1944:73-4; Süer & Çakın, 1981:17 & 21; Turan, 1971b:21-32 & 1969:134ff; Togan, 1946:192; Köymen, 1972:49].

Most likely in view of the disparity between their forces, Sultan Alp-Arslan is thought to have approved an envoy from the caliph, the jurist al-Muhalban (or al-Muhallaban), to offer Romanos Diogenes peace. The emperor is said to have responded with the retort that talks could begin only in Rayy, asking whether it would be better to winter in Isfahan or Hamadan? He is said to have added that he had been informed Hamadan would be cold and that he would stable his horses there while he wintered in Isfahan. Turkish scholars note that according to al-Azrak the envoy agreed that Hamadan would be best for the horses, but that he could not profess to know where the emperor would be spending the winter. Once the jurist had returned (August 24, 1071), the Seljuks appear to have started to harry and harass the Byzantine camp [Sevim, 1993:219ff; Dirimtekin, 1993:230ff; Kafesoğlu, *IA Vol. 7*:242ff; Süer & Çakın, 1981:22; Yınanç, 1944:74; Köymen, 1972:52-3; Turan, 1965:136-7; see also Karolidis, 1993:60-1].

The following morning (August 25, 1071), Romanos Diogenes took command of the Byzantine centre. The Cappadocian Attaliates took command of the wing consisting mainly of heavy cavalry from Anatolia and the remaining Peçenek light cavalry while Briennios took command of the other wing, which consisted mainly of heavy cavalry from the Balkans and the remaining Uz light cavalry. It must be pointed out, however,

that Turkish scholars are disagreed as to who was in charge of which wing [see Köymen, 1972:62]. In any case, the Byzantine cavalry on the flanks appears to have totalled 15,000. The rearguard, which is thought to have included Armenian nobility, was under the command of Andronicos Ducas. According to Turkish military historians [Süer & Çakın, 1981:25-9], Sultan Alp-Arslan is said to have divided his forces into three, hiding the main part in the hills to his left and rear. Thus, instead of a rearguard, it is thought a small reserve was assigned to each wing of the force, presumably the mamluks under his command being in the centre, with the exception of Sav-Tekin. Köymen disagrees with this, accepting only that Sultan Alp-Arslan set a trap by hiding the forces under the command of Taranges [Köymen, 1972:62-3], which seems to be a misspelling of Sarhang, Sav-Tekin's rank [Sümer & Sevim, 1971:XX].

As pious Muslim legend would have it, having put aside his bow and quiver, the sultan took up only his sword and mace like the common soldiery under his command. Dressed all in white, which is equally unlikely, he is said to have tied his horse's tail into a knot. Finally, after Friday prayers, and therefore possibly at 13:30, Sultan Alp-Arslan is thought to have finally launched the attacks aimed at dispersing the cavalry shielding the Byzantine centre so as to draw out Romanos Diogenes into the trap. The Byzantine cavalry appear to have broken under what is thought to have been a relentless shower of arrows. Whether he thought the Seljuks' main force was also at their centre, or in order to bolster the gaps opened in the cavalry lines, Romanos Diogenes is known to have advanced and Sultan Alp-Arslan feigned retreat as planned. Thus the Byzantines would have entered the trap fighting around 16:00. It is at this juncture that the Uz and Peçenek said to have deserted in battle would have broken ranks. If so, this would have coincided with the fresh onslaught unleashed by the main body of Seljuk soldiery, and

hence possibly the reported break in the Byzantine right wing, which exposed their centre to bloody fighting. While Romanos Diogenes tried to reorder and bolster his right flank to stabilize the situation, the left wing is said to have also collapsed – possibly under attack from Sav-Tekin hidden to the sultan's rear. Afraid that his camp would fall, it is at this juncture that Romanos Diogenes seems to have ordered a retreat. In view of the distance his camp now would have been from the battle and, therefore, possibly under the impression that the main force had broken, it is known that at this point Andronicos Ducas took flight and the Armenian nobility followed suit. Completely encircled as a result by 19:00 the Byzantines' defeat would have been final. Romanos Diogenes was wounded as night fell and captured by a common soldier who allegedly kept him tied to his tent-pole until the next morning [Köymen, 1972:62-4; Süer & Çakın, 1981:25-9; Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 7:242ff; Sevim, 1993:219ff; Dirimtekin, 1993:230ff; Yınanç, 1944:75-6; Turan, 1971b:21-32 & 1969:137ff].

When his captor brought Romanos Diogenes to Sultan Alp-Arslan's tent, apparently Vasilakios fell to his feet in tears. Accordingly, the jurist al-Muhalban confirmed his identity. Sultan Alp-Arslan is said to have criticized Romanos Diogenes for having refused his peace offer and ticked off his errors on the battlefield. When asked by the sultan what kind of treatment he expected, Romanos Diogenes is said to have replied that most likely he would be killed, or put in chains to be shown off throughout Islamdom, or possibly that he could be sent back to Istanbul as an ally [Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 7:242ff; Yınanç, 1944:76-82; Turan, 1971b:21-32]. Certainly, Sultan Alp-Arslan allowed Romanos Diogenes to return to Istanbul, but the conditions of his release remain unclear. Whatever these may have been, upon news of his capture his enemies declared Empress Eudoxia's son Michael Ducas emperor. On his way to reclaim his

crown, Romanos Diogenes was defeated at Sivas and later in Adana, where he gave himself up on the condition that he was allowed to live out his life as a monk. Having been blinded, he died soon afterwards in a monastery [Köymen, 1972:69-73; see also Karolidis, 1993:65-72].

Lauded and celebrated throughout Islamdom, his victory at Malazgirt having been equated with those previously won at Yarmük (636) and Qadisiyya (637) against the Byzantines and the Sasanians respectively, Sultan Alp-Arslan embarked on his final campaign. The sultan's brother Ilyas, who was then in Khwarazm, had been at war with the Karakhanid ruler in the West, Shams al-Mulk Nasr Khan, who resided in Samarkand. While in Transoxania, however, Sultan Alp-Arslan was stabbed by a fortress commander he had captured and consequently died (November 1072) [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:370].

#### ***4.5 Contention for the Throne***

Although Malik-Shah was his favourite, Ayaz was the eldest of Sultan Alp-Arslan's sons, of whom Togan-Shah, Tutuş and Tekiş were all younger than Malik-Shah [Kafesoğlu, 1953:14 & IA Vol. 10:353ff]. The sultan appears to have been quite specific in his will, which he is said to have communicated verbally on his deathbed, assigning Nizam al-Mulk as executor. Accordingly, Çağrı Beg's real estate and 500,000 dinars in Balkh were to be given to Ayaz on the condition that he supported Malik-Shah. Otherwise Malik-Shah was free to use his grandfather's fortune to fight Ayaz. Furthermore, Fars and Kirman were to remain Kara-Arslan Kavurt's, on the condition he married the sultan's widow and settled in Shiraz [*Ibid.* 1953:16-7; also Merçil, 1980:45].

Malik-Shah acceded at the age of 18 (November 25, 1072). His first action was to increase the pay of the soldiery (accession money?) by 700,000 dinars. The new sultan then buried his father in Marv, next to Çağrı Beg, and moved to Nishapur where he distributed the contents of the treasury kept in the inner castle among his retinue and commanders. Thinking that he had ensured their support, he informed his father's governors and vassals that he had acceded to the throne, asking them to have the khutba read in his name. Encouraged by some Turkic mamluk commanders who secretly offered their services, Kara-Arslan Kavurt refused, saying *I am the eldest brother; you are the younger son, hence I merit my brother Alp-Arslan's inheritance more*. To this Malik-Shah is said to have replied that *while there is a son, a brother can not inherit*. Kavurt appears to have hoped also to gain the support of the Türkmén situated between Hamadan and Rayy. He is said to have departed for Rayy with 2,000 cavalry and 4,000 foot soldiers. Once there Sultan Malik-Shah disbursed 500,000 dinars along with 5,000 suits of armour and weapons among the Türkmén, possibly pre-empting his uncle who arrived in the environs of Hamadan two days later [Kafesoğlu, 1953:18-21; Merçil, 1980:46-7; Köymen, 1963:69].

Sultan Malik-Shah's forces are thought to have included not only his mamluks but also the Türkmén (though the Türkmén may have simply remained impartial [Köymen, 1963:163]), as well as Arab and Kurdish contingents, which seems certain. The latter were the forces of two Seljukid vassals who had been on their way to Sultan Alp-Arslan and included an envoy from the caliph. The two armies met outside Hamadan (1073). When Kavurt attacked the sultan's right wing, the mamluk soldiery under the command of Sav-Tekin begged for mercy. The critical blow appears to have been dealt by the Seljuk's vassals' forces on the left wing, under the command of Temirel (or Temrek),

who disrupted Kavurt's right wing, enabling Sultan Malik-Shah and Nizam al-Mulk at the centre to win the day. Having been thwarted on the battlefield, the mamluk soldiery is said to have pillaged the tents of the said vassals, not to mention the caliph's envoy [Merçil, 1980:47-51; Köymen, 1963:69; Kafesoğlu, 1953:22].

Apparently Kavurt escaped into the mountains where he was reported by a peasant and captured. What emerges from the contradictory versions of subsequent events is that Kara-Arslan Kavurt remained insistent he had acted upon the invitation of the sultan's mamluk commanders, possibly also providing their letters as proof, which Nizam al-Mulk burned in the sultan's presence without opening. In any case, Kavurt appears to have been moved to Hamadan to prevent further provocation. The Turkic commanders sympathetic to Kavurt had gathered outside Nizam al-Mulk's tent immediately after the battle and asked for more money and further iqta's while shouting Kavurt's name. Appearing to acquiesce, the vizier had Kavurt killed. The consensus of Turkish scholars is that given the sultan's reported reluctance to have his uncle removed once and for all, Nizam al-Mulk acted with alacrity to prevent further bloodshed. Nor is it clear if Kavurt was strangled according to Turkic tradition with his own bowstring by an one-eyed Armenian, or by a Kıpçak with whom he fought for an hour before succumbing, or indeed if he took poison as reported. In any case, Kavurt is said to have been buried next to İbrahim Yınal [Merçil, 1980:52-9; Köymen, 1963:70-1; Kafesoğlu, 1953:23 & 26].

The confusion surrounding Kavurt's demise extends to his eight sons. Current opinion is that his two eldest, namely Sultan-Shah and Emiran-Shah, possibly also Turan-Shah, were with him on the battlefield along with İbrahim Yınal's son. All are said to have been blinded in Sultan Malik-Shah's presence after their father's execution, Emiran-Shah

dying in the process. Upon hearing of these events, some of the Turkic mamluk soldiery are rumoured to have dispersed and begun to pillage the environs of Hamadan, cursing Nizam al-Mulk. Whatever the case, Sultan-Shah and possibly also Turan-Shah were not disabled completely by their ordeal and later escaped. Certainly, Sultan-Shah (1074-85) and Turan-Shah (1085-98) lived to rule Kirman, Fars and Oman. Finally, Sultan Malik-Shah is known to have mounted a campaign against Sultan-Shah for reasons unknown, which clearly did not alter the status quo (1075-6 or 1079-80) [Merçil, 1980:59-63 & 69-74; also Kafesoğlu, 1953:25-6].

#### ***4.6 Transoxania***

Upon hearing of Sultan Alp-Arslan's death and Sultan Malik-Shah's return to Khurasan, the Karakhanid ruler in the West, Shams al-Mulk Nasr Khan entered Tirmiz from Samarkand where he resided (December 1072). Taking advantage of Alp-Arslan's eldest son Ayaz's absence, he also entered Balkh. Ayaz appears to have returned immediately and taken back this city (January 1073). However, when he attempted to take back Tirmiz as well, he was defeated and lost most of his 10,000 strong force while retreating across the Syr-Darya (March 1073). Concurrent with the Karakhanid advance, the Ghaznavids attacked Çiğil-Kent in Tukharistan and captured the sultan's uncle Osman whom they took with his treasury to Ghazna (January 1073) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:19-20].

Sultan Malik-Shah did not move to secure the Great Seljuk Empire's eastern realms until he received the caliph's endorsement (October 1073). In the meantime his uncle Ayaz died in Balkh (1073-4). When he was ready the sultan advanced on Tirmiz via Herat, sending Sav-Tekin ahead to sever the city's connection with Samarkand. When



Sav-Tekin had defeated a Karakhanid army by the Syr-Darya, the sultan laid siege to Tirmiz. Isolated, Shams al-Mulk Nasr Khan's brother capitulated. The sultan released him upon entering Tirmiz and having garrisoned Sav-Tekin there advanced on Samarkand. When Shams al-Mulk Nasr Khan evacuated the city and asked to be forgiven for his transgressions, the sultan retired to Rayy. Here he received the Ghaznavid envoy, sent with a considerable amount of money and gifts to secure the sultan's sister's hand for Sultan Ibrahim (1058-99), which was granted. It is presumed, therefore, that his uncle Osman was released earlier, during Sultan Malik-Shah's advance through Herat. Certainly, the sultan appears to have journeyed to Serakhs next, where he is said to have received his uncle and given him the governance of a city, the regions of Gur and Herat having been given to Böri-Pars. Similarly, those of Balkh and Tukharistan were given to the sultan's brother Tekiş [*Ibid.* 28-30; also Öngül, 2000:325].

#### ***4.7 The Caucasus***

Next, Sultan Malik-Shah took charge of a campaign against the Georgian King Giorgi II (1072-89). This appears to have transpired upon the instigation of the commander Ioannes Liparit who having put down a rebellion but then sold the castle concerned to the Shaddadid dynasty in Ganja (Gyandzha). At the end of this campaign, which both Ioannes and his son appear to have joined, the sultan took Ganja from the Shaddadids and assigned it to his brother Tutuş, leaving Sav-Tekin in Yerevan as commander (1076). King Giorgi II defeated Sav-Tekin twice as a result of which he lost Yerevan as well as Kars. This seems to have prompted the former king of Ani, Gagik, to try to re-establish his kingdom. Ioannes Liparit now began to resist Seljuk authority from the castle he had been given. The sultan returned, laid siege to Ioannes and took him prisoner, leaving

Sav-Tekin additional forces (1078-9). King Giorgi II again defeated Sav-Tekin, so that the sultan next sent an army under Ahmad who established Seljukid authority throughout the Caucasus, inclusive of Trabzon (Trebizond) on the Black Sea coast (1080-1). As a result King Giorgi II was forced to travel to Isfahan to proclaim his allegiance, which was accepted. Subsequently, the Caucasus region was included in the province of Azarbayjan under Yakuti's son Isma'il (1084). But the sultan had to return yet again. Although Ganja and Ani appear to have been sold to the Shaddadids in the meantime, these were taken back by force. At the end of this campaign, Ganja and the surrounding region were incorporated directly into the Great Seljuk Empire (1086) [*Ibid.* 113-7; also Sevim, 1965 & Ross, *IA* Vol. 11:381-2].

#### ***4.8 Anatolia***

It is at this anarchic conjuncture of events that Kutalmış's sons, Mansur, Süleyman-Shah, Alp-Ilek (or Alp-Ilig) and Devlet (or Donat) enter the historical record in northern Syria and the Türkmen colonization of Anatolia gains coherence. Although most Turkish scholars agreed that they were assigned to the conquest of Anatolia by Sultan Malik-Shah, possibly on the instigation of the caliph [Yinanç, 1944:57-8, 86 & 88; thus also Kafesoğlu, 1953:62 & *IA* Vol. 10:370, Köymen, 1963:102-3 & Sevim, 1990b:70], it is more likely that they benefited from Sultan Alp-Arslan's death, making their way to south-eastern Anatolia in the confusion that ensued [Kaymaz, 1993:261].

After Malazgirt, the new emperor, Michael VII Ducas, appointed Isaac Comnenus with his brother Alexius and the Norman Roussel to clear Anatolia of the Türkmen. However, when they arrived in Kayseri, which had been badly damaged by an

earthquake, Roussel fell out with Isaac and departed with the 400 Norman mercenaries in his company. Whether for this reason or because the task he had been set was now beyond the means of the Byzantine Empire, Isaac was defeated and taken prisoner by a Türkmen force that appeared in the environs of Kayseri. Having bought his freedom, he rejoined his brother in Ankara, from where they appear to have had to evade yet another group of Türkmen who followed them west across the Sakarya River [Kafesoğlu, 1953:63; also Turan, 1971b:51].

Said to have augmented his force from the region he was pillaging between Sivas, Kayseri and Ankara, Roussel next defeated a Byzantine force sent out under the emperor's uncle, Caesar Ioannes Ducas, whom he took prisoner with his son and Nicephorus Botaniates (1073). The battle took place near the Sakarya River, which is taken to indicate that Roussel had been retreating ahead of the advancing Türkmen under Artuk Beg. Certainly, the emperor is said to have made an agreement with Artuk Beg who then defeated and captured Roussel with Ioannes Ducas near Izmit (Nicomedia), only 100 kms from Istanbul. Artuk Beg, however, did not hand his captives to the emperor. Instead, he ransomed them to their families. At this point Artuk Beg was recalled by Sultan Malik-Shah who was faced with Kara-Arslan Kavurt's challenge. Roussel returned to central Anatolia, where he re-established himself in Amasya. Although Alexius was assigned to deal with him, at first he failed because the local populace is said to have preferred Roussel's rule to that of the Byzantines. However, when a large Türkmen force under Tutak Beg entered central Anatolia, Alexius was able to persuade them to capture Roussel. Since Roussel also had approached Tutak Beg, Alexius is said to have had to reward Tutak Beg handsomely. On his way back to Istanbul with Roussel, Alexius was engaged by yet another group of

Türkmen who had penetrated north-western Anatolia up to the Black Sea coast [Kafesoğlu, 1953:64-8; also Turan, 1971b:51-2].

#### ***4.9 Syria and Palestine***

Türkmen presence in Syria can be traced to 1063, with the arrival of Hanoğlu Harun in the environs of Diyarbakır in south-eastern Anatolia (see above, 4.3). After Ibrahim Yınal's brother and Sultan Alp-Arslan's brother-in-law Er-Basgan's (or Er-Sigun) unsuccessful involvement with Kavurt and flight (1068-9), an affiliate of his, Kurlu is thought to have broken away with Uvakoğlu Atsız and his brother Çavlı (1069-70). They appear to have been joined by a group of Harun's Türkmen with whom they became situated in the environs of Ramla, immediately north-western of Jerusalem, some of the Türkmen moving into the Jordan Valley. Kurlu Beg is said to have revived the deserted town by helping to improve the olive harvest and thus attracting farmers back to the region. Otherwise he appears to have sold his services to the highest bidder, namely the Fatimid governor of Acre (Akka) and the Mirdasid ruler of Aleppo, who had proclaimed his allegiance to the Seljuks (1070), pillaging and confiscating when not paid. Whatever his reasons, Kurlu Beg laid siege to Damascus (Dimashq) and then Acre where he died (1071) [Sevim, 1965:30-7 & 1990b:33; also Turan, 1965:45-50, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff & Cahen, 1984:89].

On his death, Uvakoğlu Atsız of the Kınık Oguz became the leader of the Türkmen in Palestine. His first action appears to have been to besiege Jerusalem. Its Fatimid governor, who was of Turkic origin, is said to have handed over the city on condition that it was not sacked (1071). Next Atsız Beg besieged Damascus (1071 & 1073), while

his lieutenants mounted expeditions along the coast toward Acre. When Acre fell to the Türkmen in the same manner as Jerusalem had done (October/November 1074), their beg, Şöklü, refused Atsız Beg's demand of half the spoils. In order to strengthen his hand against his former leader Şöklü Beg seems to have married his sister to the Fatimid governor of Damascus and exchanged hostages with branches of the Arab tribes in the region. Before his new allies could be of use, however, Atsız Beg is said to have lifted his siege of Damascus long enough to attack and defeat him (April/May 1075). Undaunted, Şöklü Beg invited an as yet unidentified son of Kutalmış said to have arrived duly from south-eastern Anatolia with a younger brother and nephew.<sup>23</sup> On Şöklü Beg's instigation they proclaimed their allegiance to the Fatimid caliph to attract help from this quarter. Atsız Beg, however, also pre-empted this development by once again advancing from Jerusalem and defeating Şöklü and his allies. Having executed Şöklü and his son, Atsız Beg is known to have informed Sultan Malik-Shah of his three captive Seljukid princes (autumn, 1075) [Sevim, 1965:43-7 & 1990b:35-7; also Kafesoğlu, 1953:33].

Meanwhile another of Kutalmış's sons, thought to be Süleyman-Shah [Turan, 1971b:48], had laid siege to Aleppo. Persuaded by a combination of military force and money to lift the siege, Süleyman-Shah asked Atsız Beg to return his brothers and nephew. The request was refused, the captive princes being sent to Isfahan on the sultan's orders (December 1075). Next Süleyman-Shah is said to have besieged Antakya, forcing its Byzantine governor to offer to pay an annual tax. Upon hearing that the 3,000 strong Türkmen force Atsız Beg had requested from Sultan Malik-Shah was

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<sup>23</sup> The name of Resul-Tekin's son(s) is not known [Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:353ff]. It is thought likely that Kutalmış's sons were Alp-Ilek and Devlet [Sevim, 1990a:24].

approaching Aleppo, Süleyman-Shah attacked and killed some of them, plundering their baggage train before returning to the environs of Antakya [Sevim, 1965:47-8 & 1990b:37-8].

#### ***4.10 The Rise of Süleyman-Shah***

An absence of princes from the reigning branch of the Seljukid dynasty in Anatolia appears to have been critical in enabling Kutalmış's sons to take up leadership of the Türkmen in Anatolia. In particular those Türkmen who had rebelled against the Seljukid sultans at one time or another would have been more than amenable to Kutalmış's sons. That said, the dire straits the Byzantine Empire found itself in after Malazgirt more than contributed to the power vacuum, helping this branch of the Seljuks to establish a polity of their own.

The gravity of the situation in Anatolia did not escape the attention of Pope Gregory VII. He wrote to the emperor that the time had come to unite the Orthodox Church with that of the Catholics (July 9, 1073). Although Michael VII Ducas acquiesced, the pope's call for help (February 2 & March 1, 1074) was not answered for another quarter of a century. Whether due to this or not, the emperor is known to have asked the caliph to mediate a peace agreement with Sultan Malik-Shah (June 1074). It is not certain, however, if the sultan received his envoys as a result (1076), because a Byzantine embassy is dated also to his last campaign to the Caucasus (1086). This latter date seems the more likely given the problems discussed immediately below. In any case, as with the reputed agreement between their predecessors, the outcome of these approaches is also not known [Kafesoğlu, 1953:74 & 116; Turan, 1971b:52-3 & 57].

Since those unable to take refuge in the towns and cities were more vulnerable to the Türkmen invasion that ensued after Malazgirt, Michael VII Ducas is thought to have re-located large sections of the remaining population in the countryside to the Balkans. Although there may have been some migrations westward it is doubtful that this was on a large scale given the Bulgar uprising (1074), the Nestor rebellion (1075), and plague and famine in the Balkans (1076). Amidst all this, the Byzantine army in Thrace revolted under the command of Nicephorus Briennios (1075). While still in Edirne (Adrianople), Briennios declared himself emperor and advanced on Istanbul (1077). The commander of the Byzantine army in Anatolia, Botaniates, who had been busy lobbying the senators, clergy and populace of Istanbul, also rebelled. In response, the emperor is said to have released Roussel from prison and sent him against Briennios with Alexius Comnenus, arranging to capture Botaniates with Kutalmış's sons who are thought to have been in Konya (Iconium) at the time. Certainly, Süleyman-Shah is said to have situated his men at key crossroads and passes in order to intercept Botaniates who was travelling at night and hiding by day. When his advance units finally engaged Botaniates near Iznik (Nicaea), however, it is unlikely that Süleyman-Shah was persuaded to switch sides at Er-Basgan's instigation. This is not to deny that Botaniates may have gained the latter's support. What appears to be overlooked, however, is that at the time the Türkmen seem to have been supporting Nicephorus Melissenos. On deciding to become emperor, Nicephorus Melissenos is said to have toured those walled cities and fortifications in central and western Anatolia not yet under Türkmen control to gather support. However, as he did this under the armed protection of the Türkmen it is thought to have enabled them to enter these, too. For instance, Süleyman-Shah is thought to have entered Iznik in this manner as early as 1078. As a result Botaniates was able to continue to Istanbul with the addition of 2,000 horsemen from Süleyman-Shah

and ascend to the throne (April 3, 1078). Interestingly enough, this Türkmen force is deemed also to have enabled Alexius Comnenus to defeat Briennios, who was equally dependent on the Peçenek and Uz [Turan, 1971b:53-5 & 60-2 and Kafesoğlu, 1953:70-3, 76 & IA Vol. 10:385ff; also Cahen, 1984:90].

At this point Süleyman-Shah is said to have fallen out with his elder brother Mansur who on being defeated by him sought refuge in Istanbul. Whether Mansur returned to Anatolia before Sultan Malik-Shah's envoys reached Istanbul to request his surrender, or the new emperor did not comply, Sultan Malik-Shah next sent Porsuk. With his help Süleyman-Shah defeated Mansur who is said to have died on the battlefield. As a result it is proposed that the sultan recognized Süleyman-Shah's sovereignty. Since those in favour of this interpretation are also of the opinion that Kutalmış's sons were assigned to the conquest of Anatolia, the implication is that Süleyman-Shah was rewarded for remaining loyal. As for the caliph addressing Süleyman-Shah as sultan, consensus is that this was intentionally divisive rather than a ratification of the sultan's assignation [Yınanç, 1944:105-7; Köymen, 1963:102-6; Kafesoğlu, 1953:75; Sevim, 1990:29].

Turan disagreed. He took the report that the caliph had addressed Süleyman-Shah as sultan confirmation that Sultan Malik-Shah had sent his commander against Kutalmış's sons, rather than in aid of one against the other. Porsuk's campaign is coincident with not only the sultan's brother Tutuş being assigned to Syria and Palestine, but also the Türkmen begs returning from raids into Anatolia being ordered to join him (1078). Turan argued that possibly Sultan Malik-Shah and Emperor Michael VII Ducas had come to an agreement as concerns Anatolia (1074). Accordingly, this would explain Kutalmış's sons' support for Botaniates, given that in return he would have been



amenable to their sovereignty over part of Anatolia (hopefully as his vassals) [Turan, 1971b:56-60; also Kaymaz, 1993:263 & Cahen, 1984:90-1].

However, this interpretation of events seems equally unsatisfactory. Melissenos seems to have been preparing for the last leg of his journey with Süleyman-Shah nearby in Eskişehir (Dorylaeum) when he was besieged (1080). Unable to persuade Alexius Comnenus to advance on Iznik, Emperor Botaniates is said to have assigned a palace official who appears to have ignored the advice of his generals. When news arrived of Süleyman-Shah's approach, however, he handed over his command. Although his generals attempted an orderly retreat, Süleyman-Shah caught up and routed them. As a result Süleyman-Shah made Iznik the capital of his domains, which now stretched from Adana in south-eastern Anatolia to the shores of the Bosphorus, where he had established customs offices. As for Melissenos, his services were dispensed with soon afterwards, coincident with Alexius Comnenus being declared emperor by the Byzantine forces in Thrace (1081) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:76-9; also Turan, 1971b:60-2].

During the following year Emperor Alexius I Comnenus dislodged the Türkmen from the Asian shores of the Bosphorus, forcing them to withdraw. Having learnt that they could not engage the Türkmen in large-scale shock-combat, at least not until the Türkmen saw they had the advantage, the Byzantines likewise resorted to raiding. Eight to ten soldiery is said to have disembarked from boats at odd hours of the night and returned as soon as they had achieved their goal. In this way the Byzantines were able to regain a foothold, disembarking as many as fifty cavalry at a time even during the day. When the Türkmen had withdrawn toward Izmit, possibly because at the time Süleyman-Shah was engaged in the conquest of Tarsus in the southeast, the emperor offered peace. The acceptance of a stream, which is thought to be that of present day

Dragos (Drakon), as the boundary between the Byzantine Empire and the newly founded Seljuk polity clearly confirms the conquest of Anatolia (1082) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:80-1; also Turan, 1971b:60-2].

The agreement not only left Emperor Alexius free to grapple with the Normans, but also enabled Süleyman-Shah to consolidate his hold on Tarsus and its environs (1083). Süleyman-Shah now came in direct contact with the Armenian Philaretos Brachamios, a former commander of Romanos Diogenes and thus also Botaniates' comrade, who until then had enjoyed a free hand in much of south-eastern Anatolia. Prior to the Seljuks, the region south of the Caucasus Mountains, between the Caspian Sea and Lake Van had in the main been under the control of members of the Armenian Bagratid dynasty, a branch of which had also resided in north-eastern Anatolia. This latter region and that of the Armenian Ardzruni dynasty, namely the region around Lake Van, however, had been incorporated into the Byzantine Empire during the reign of Basil II (976-1025), who as noted had resettled many Armenians in Sivas and Kayseri. Subsequently, members of these and other leading Armenian families had been all but eradicated by Constantine IX Monomachus (1042-55). Nonetheless, in the years after the battle of Malazgirt, various Armenian dynasties re-emerged in eastern and south-eastern Anatolia. Although Philaretos Brachamios gained control of these fledgling princedoms as well as of Antakya (1078), his cruel and wanton approach is said to have made the local Christian population already under pressure from the Türkmén resentful. In order to maintain his position, therefore, Philaretos Brachamios appears to have proclaimed his allegiance to Emperor Botaniates while paying tribute and sending gifts to both Sultan Malik-Shah and his brother Tutuş, as well as the rulers of Aleppo and

Mosul [Sevim, 1983:7-10 & 21-2; also Kafesoğlu, 1953:82-3 & Turan, 1971b:68-9].

There is no mention, however, how he financed this system if indeed so.

Be that as it may, possibly on the invitation of Brachamios' son, Süleyman-Shah secretly advanced on Antakya while the Türkmen laid siege to Malatya and various other urban centres in the southeast. Süleyman-Shah is said to have taken only a few hundred men with him to avoid alerting Tutuş or Muslim, the Uqailid ruler of Mosul. Having been let in at night (December 12, 1084), Süleyman-Shah took the inner city despite some resistance (January 11, 1085) and consolidated his hold by also taking the towns and fortifications in the environs of Antakya [Sevim, 1965:80-4; Kafesoğlu, 1953:83; Turan, 1971b:69-73].

In order to understand how Süleyman-Shah subsequently came into direct conflict with Tutuş and lost his life, however, it is necessary to follow the developments not only in south-eastern Anatolia, but also in Syria and Palestine. Since Sultan Malik-Shah remained active throughout this period in the Caucasus and north-eastern Anatolia as well, Tutuş's involvement in Syria and Palestine appears to have been part of a broader strategy concerning the western marches of the Great Seljuk Empire. Consequently, the events in south-eastern Anatolia have been included with those concerning Syria and Palestine.

#### ***4.11 Incorporation of Syria and Palestine***

Kutalmış's sons, thought to have been Alp-Ilek and Devlet, had been captured by Uvakoğlu Atsız and sent to Sultan Malik-Shah (1075). Although at the time Atsız Beg requested help from the sultan in the conquest of Syria and Palestine, when the city of

Tyre (Sur) capitulated on the condition that the Fatimid khutba would not be changed, he agreed. Also it appears he demanded a share of Nasr's inheritance from his father Mahmud, although Nasr was Sultan Malik-Shah's vassal. When Nasr refused, he settled instead for 15,000 dinars. At this juncture the sultan is said to have wanted to replace Atsız with his brother Tutuş but that Nizam al-Mulk prevented him, thus possibly Tutuş's appointment to Ganja instead. Certainly Atsız Beg later took Tripoli (Tarabulus) and finally also Damascus. In the latter case he is said to have been aided by its soldiery's revolt against the Fatimid governor, which the inhabitants joined (July/August 1075). When the Fatimid soldiery now under a commander of their own choice, still failed to break Atsız Beg's stranglehold on Damascus, the inhabitants are said to have once again become restless. Consequently, the new commander seems to have capitulated without a fight, being rewarded with two coastal cities (March 1076). Unlike Tyre, however, in Damascus the Fatimid khutba was replaced [Sevim, 1965:48-52 & 1990b:38-40; also Kafesoğlu, 1953:31-2].

In the previous three years, Badr al-Jamali, the former governor of Damascus and later of Acre, had put Fatimid affairs in order by invitation of the caliph. Of Armenian origin, while still in Damascus he had formed a personal guard from his countrymen whom he took with him to Cairo. Once there, he surprised the caliphate's Turkic commanders and killed them, ending their anarchy. The son of one Il-Deniz, however, managed to escape with his father's valuables and some men, taking refuge with Atsız Beg. With his encouragement, Uvakoğlu Atsız now embarked on a campaign against the Fatimids at the head of 5,000 Türkmen, Arabs and Kurds (1076). When this force arrived outside the city of Rif (Gaza?), Il-Denizoğlu advised Atsız that if he took the city he would have Egypt at his feet. After a siege said to have lasted nearly two months,

Atsız Beg succeeded. Then, for reasons best known to himself he demanded money from Badr al-Jamali in Cairo. Although promised 150,000 dinars, possibly because the money did not transpire, he advanced after a two-month wait. This period seems to have enabled Badr al-Jamali to take sufficient measures to defeat Atsız Beg outside Cairo, taking 10,000 women and children prisoner in the process, as well as 3,000 horses (January/February 1077). On the way back Atsız Beg was not allowed into Rif, nor Ramla, being harassed all the way to Damascus where he is said to have arrived with only ten or fifteen horsemen [Sevim, 1965:52-6 & 1990:41-2; Kafesoğlu, 1953:34-6].

In the wake of Atsız Beg's disastrous Egyptian campaign many if not all the urban centres of Syria and Palestine appear to have reverted to the Fatimid khutba. Aided by the arrival of a fresh group of Türkmen from Anatolia, however, Atsız Beg embarked on a bloody re-conquest of Syria and Palestine, which he started by saving his wife and family from enslavement in Jerusalem where he had left them en route to Egypt. But upon his return to Damascus he is said to have found that the city had been reduced to a population of only 3,000. Badr al-Jamali now sent out a force under Nasr al-Dawla al-Juyushi, a commander from his personal guard who laid siege to Damascus (1077/8). Although this was unsuccessful, the following year al-Juyushi returned with an army with which he invaded Palestine before besieging Damascus. This appears to have prompted Atsız Beg to ask the sultan's brother Tutuş for help. On entering Damascus, Tutuş had Uvakoğlu Atsız and his brother Çavlı strangled with their bowstrings (1078/9) [Sevim, 1965:57-60 & 1990:43-5; Kafesoğlu, 1953:37-8].

After his defeat in Egypt, thinking that Atsız had been killed, Sultan Malik-Shah had reassigned his brother Tutuş to the conquest of Syria and Palestine. When Atsız heard of this, he sent the sultan gifts and 30,000 dinars, thus earning his reprieve (1077/8)

[Sevim, 1965:59]. As will be remembered, however, by then the Georgians had regained most of the Caucasus such that Sultan Malik-Shah had taken command of a second campaign there. As this is coincident also with Porsuk's Anatolian campaign, which resulted in the death of Kutalmış's son Mansur, it seems that Sultan Malik-Shah had left Atsız in place until the situation there clarified. Certainly, Türkmen begs such as Afşin, Sabuk, Dilmaçoğlu and Davdavoğlu are thought to have been ordered by the sultan to join Tutuş [Sevim, 1965:66-7; Turan, 1971b:57]. In short, with Süleyman-Shah's ascendance and the loss of Palestine to the Fatimids, not to mention the repeated sieges of Damascus by the resurgent Fatimids, Atsız must have been perceived as a liability.

Diverted from his assignment to Syria and Palestine by Atsız's reappearance, Tutuş nevertheless laid siege to Aleppo with the support of the Uqailid Muslim's forces in Mosul. However, on Muslim's instructions his soldiery instead joined in the defence of the city. It was when Tutuş returned the following spring that he was called to Damascus by Atsız. With Tutuş busy in Damascus and its environs, Muslim requested and gained permission from Sultan Malik-Shah to take Aleppo on the invitation of its inhabitants. Having done so (1080), Muslim took all the fortifications in the region where the Türkmen were situated, killing or imprisoning them. Next he extended Uqailid power into south-eastern Anatolia by taking Harran (1081-2). Consequently, the Byzantine governor of Urfa (Edessa), and subsequently also Philaretos Brachamios in Antakya, ostensibly proclaimed their allegiances (1082-3). When Tutuş advanced on Aleppo with Artuk Beg, Sultan Malik-Shah ordered his brother back to Damascus and recalled Artuk Beg. Muslim, however, now laid siege to Damascus, withdrawing only when Harran revolted (May/June, 1083) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:40-44; Sevim, 1965:66-79].

At this juncture Caliph al-Qa'im's and for a time his successor Caliph al-Muqtadi's vizier Fakhr al-Dawla Muhammad b. Jahir retired to the capital Isfahan (June 1083). Originally from Mosul, he had started his career as the Marwanids' vizier. Consequently, he seems to have been more than familiar with their fortunes, which are said to have taken a downturn with the appointment of a new administration. In any case, despite his advanced age he appears to have persuaded Sultan Malik-Shah that the Marwanids' domains, which included numerous cities and fortifications in south-eastern and eastern Anatolia, should be incorporated directly into the empire [Kafesoğlu, 1953:46-8].

The commander of Iraq al-Ajam and Türkmen begs such as Artuk, Sabuk and Dilmaçoğlu, not to mention two neighbouring vassals, were all assigned to Fakhr al-Dawla. Alerted to the approaching Seljukid forces, however, the Marwanid ruler, Mansur, was able to engage the Uqailid Muslim who gathered all his forces and promptly arrived in Diyarbakır, which Mansur had promised along with other towns and fortifications in return for his help. Faced by his fellow Arabs and townsmen, Fakhr al-Dawla appears to have prevaricated. When the Marwanid and Uqailid leaders opened negotiations, Muhammad ordered Artuk Beg to retreat in order to allow the Uqailid forces to withdraw. Artuk Beg refused and during the night the Türkmen attacked under Çubuk Beg, apparently without the knowledge of either Artuk or Fakhr al-Dawla (July 31, 1084). Defeated, the Marwanid and Uqailid forces retired to Diyarbakır, which was put under siege. Fakhr al-Dawla then ordered Artuk Beg to collect the plunder as well as the money gained from its sale by the Türkmen and to send it to Isfahan, which again he refused. Muslim was able to agree on a price with Artuk that enabled him to withdraw from Diyarbakır (August 1084). For his part, Fakhr al-Dawla laid siege to Silvan (Mayyafariqin), where Mansur had withdrawn. When the Seljuk forces began to

take the remaining cities, towns and fortifications, Mansur journeyed to Isfahan, but was unable to gain an audience with the sultan. In the meantime, the Muslim inhabitants of Diyarbakır had opened the city gates to the Seljuks (May 4, 1085). Soon thereafter Silvan also fell (August 31, 1085). As a result, while Fakhr al-Dawla and his son took charge of Silvan and Diyarbakır respectively, the remainder of the Marwanid realms were apportioned between the Türkmen begs [Kafesoğlu, 1953:49-55; also Sevim, 1965:85].

When informed of Muslim's support of the Marwanids, Sultan Malik-Shah had assigned the Uqailids' realms to Fakhr al-Dawla Muhammad's son, ordering the Türkmen begs under his father's command to join him along with Aksungur Beg. Although Mosul capitulated without resistance and the sultan set off from Isfahan, the Uqailid Muslim appears to have gained an audience and been re-instated (November 1084). Possibly the sultan was more concerned with his brother Tekiş, who had rebelled again. On a prior occasion, 7,000 Turkic soldiery dismissed in Rayy for lack of discipline had joined Tekiş in Balkh and incited him to rebellion. Although Tekiş had taken Tirmiz, the sultan had arrived in Nishapur ahead of Tekiş who had asked to be forgiven (1080-1). On this occasion, however, he appears to have been unable to take even Serakhs and withdrawn to a fortification near Tirmiz, having been tricked into believing that Nizam al-Mulk was on his way to relieve the city. When the sultan arrived from Mosul he had him caught and blinded, appointing Tekiş's son Ahmad in his stead (1084-5). Tekiş was finally strangled with his own bowstring on Sultan Berk-Yaruk's orders (March-April 1094) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:56-9; also Öngül, 2000:325-6 & 329-31, Sevim, 1965:85 and Turan, 1971b:73].



Meanwhile, when the Uqailid Muslim asked Süleyman-Shah to pay the annual tax Philaretos Brachamios had promised for Antakya, the latter is said to have retorted that not only was he a Muslim but also likewise a vassal of Sultan Malik-Shah in whose name the Uqailid Muslim had made his demand. After each had raided the other's environs, Muslim appears to have set off to besiege Antakya. Süleyman-Shah, however, met him en route where the Türkmen under Çubuk Beg deserted Muslim who was defeated and killed (June 23, 1085). Although he seems to have besieged Aleppo immediately afterwards, Süleyman-Shah was unable to take it but returned the following spring (April 1086). The current ruler of Aleppo seems to have played for time by sending Süleyman-Shah money while informing him that he was waiting for Sultan Malik-Shah's permission. The sultan, however, appears to have offered the city to Tutuş, who promptly advanced with Artuk Beg. Having failed to regain the sultan's favour after Diyarbakır, Artuk had taken refuge with Tutuş and been rewarded with Jerusalem. The two armies are thought to have met at Ain Salm, where Süleyman-Shah's all-out attack on the detachments from Damascus failed and the Türkmen under Artuk Beg routed his forces. Süleyman-Shah is said to have been deserted not only by Çubuk Beg but also by some of his closest comrades-in-arms, possibly because Tutuş had succeeded in winning them over prior to the engagement. In any case, as a result Süleyman-Shah is thought to have committed suicide on the battlefield (June 5, 1086) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:86-90; Köymen, 1963:106-8; Sevim, 1965:89-92; Turan, 1971b:73-6].

Unlike Süleyman-Shah, Tutuş took no notice of the Uqailid ruler of Aleppo who now informed him that once again he was waiting for the sultan's permission to hand over the city as promised. Although Tutuş was able to breach the outer walls through a defending commander's defection, he is said to have abandoned his siege of the inner

city and retired to Damascus on learning that Sultan Malik-Shah was on his way (September 1086). He is thought to have been fearful of the sultan after Süleyman-Shah's death, but the fact of the matter may have been the siege of Damascus by the Fatimids. In any event, the sultan did arrive in Aleppo via Mosul and Harran, his forces taking any town or fortification that resisted, such as Manbij. Having appointed Aksungur to Aleppo, Sultan Malik-Shah sent Bozan to take Urfa from Brachamios' son, and advanced on Antakya. Süleyman-Shah's vizier handed over the city and Süleyman-Shah's son Kılıç Arslan. Sultan Malik-Shah assigned Antakya to Yağ-Sıyan. With Urfa assigned to Bozan who had taken it (February 28, 1087), the sultan returned to Aleppo. From there he went on to Baghdad for the first time (March 13, 1087). Here he attended his daughter's wedding to the caliph [Kafesoğlu, 1953:91-4; also Sevim, 1965:94-8 & Cahen, 1979:92-3].

On learning of Tutuş's return the Fatimids appear to have lifted the siege of Damascus and retired (1087/8). While Sultan Malik-Shah was pre-occupied in Baghdad, Tutuş seems to have tried to consolidate his hold on northern Syria while expanding the Seljuk realms back along the Mediterranean coast. The following year Badr al-Jamali sent out al-Juyushi (?) who was able to re-conquer most of the Mediterranean coast because Tutuş is thought to have left it undefended, thus putting pressure on Damascus (1089). Caught unprepared, Tutuş asked the sultan for help, being assigned the commanders Aksungur, Bozan and Yağ-Sıyan. However, after some initial success Tutuş and Aksungur appear to have fallen out during the siege of Tripoli. Aksungur is said to have refused to continue after having secretly received money, claiming that the city had proclaimed its allegiance to the sultan. When Bozan also left for undisclosed reasons, Tutuş was forced to withdraw to Damascus. Although he is said to have sent his son to

Sultan Malik-Shah to complain, Aksungur does not appear to have been punished (1090/1) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:98-101; Sevim, 1965:99-103].

#### *4.12 Anatolia after Süleyman-Shah*

On Süleyman-Shah's death al-Kasim is considered to have revoked the agreement he had made with Emperor Alexius, raiding toward the Bosphorus (1085). When on this occasion the emperor's tactics of launching night-raids from small boats proved unsuccessful, Alexius Comnenus is said to have suggested an alliance against Sultan Malik-Shah by flattering al-Kasim's military prowess. Initially this appears to have also failed. Instead al-Kasim took a fortification near Gemlik on the Sea of Marmara and started to build a small navy. The emperor then sent Butumites to burn the boats while a large force advanced under the command of one Tatichios who was of Peçenek origin. Al-Kasim is said to have attacked Tatichios first, but was unable to defeat him and thus prevent Butumites from burning his fledgling navy. Caught in crossfire, al-Kasim withdrew to Iznik. Tatichios, however, withdrew on receiving news of Porsuk's advance. Unaware of this, al-Kasim set off in pursuit and forced Tatichios back to Istanbul, taking Izmit. When al-Kasim realized Porsuk was after him, however, he accepted the emperor's peace offer and was invited to Istanbul. The emperor appears to have taken this opportunity to dispatch his commander Eustathios to Izmit by sea. Possibly because most of the garrison were of the local population, Eustathios appears to have had little difficulty in persuading them that al-Kasim had agreed to a joint defence of the city. Once the Byzantine force had been allowed into Izmit, however, Eustathios took control and had the walls strengthened. Al-Kasim is said to have become aware of the emperor's duplicity while embarking on his return journey after

Porsuk had withdrawn (1086/7?) [Turan, 1971b:84-5; Kafesoğlu, 1953:101-4; also Cahen, 1984:94].

It is not known why Sultan Malik-Shah recalled Porsuk, or if he did. In any case, he seems to have assigned instead the governor of Urfa, Bozan (1088/9?). While still on campaign in south-eastern Anatolia, the sultan is thought to have sent an envoy to Emperor Alexius, requesting his daughter in marriage to one of his sons and offering in return some seaports on the Anatolian coast. Accordingly, having appointed the envoy whose mother was Georgian to a high position, the emperor used him to persuade one Kara-Tekin to vacate the seaport of Sinop on the Black Sea. More likely, however, Kara-Tekin, who is rumoured to have been an affiliate of Erbasgan, was forced to withdraw from Sinop and its environs due to Bozan's advance across Anatolia and subsequent siege of Iznik. Bozan seems to have been in concert with Porsuk, who is thought to have stopped en route in Konya and nearby Aksaray, repairing these cities once they had proclaimed their allegiance to Sultan Malik-Shah. To be sure, al-Kasim is thought to have defended Iznik against Bozan with help from the Byzantines. Apparently Bozan lifted the siege after a number of unsuccessful attempts to storm the walls. Clearly under pressure from the sultan and faced with the erosion of his domains by the emperor's duplicitous opportunism, al-Kasim journeyed to Isfahan to proclaim allegiance to Sultan Malik-Shah. Unable to gain an audience, he was told to see Bozan who had him apprehended and strangled with his own bowstring. After this the military governors of Antakya and Aleppo, namely Yağ-Sıyan and Aksungur, joined Bozan on a subsequent campaign, but al-Kasim's son al-Gazi once again thwarted them at Iznik. The commanders are said to have returned to their cities on Sultan Malik-Shah's death (1092), having considered and abandoned the idea of going on to take Istanbul instead

[Turan, 1971b:86-7; Kafesoğlu, 1953:105-7]. Although a closer look would have told them that Istanbul could not be taken overland from the Asian side of the Bosphorus, it is unlikely they would have even considered this, given Sultan Malik-Shah's repeated attempts at reconciliation with the Byzantines.

There can be no doubt, however, that despite Süleyman-Shah's demise at the hands of Tutuş, not to mention the constant pressure exerted by Sultan Malik-Shah on Iznik and other cities, the Türkmen begs in Anatolia continued to pursue their own fortunes. Rather than an indication of rebellion, however, this seems to have been due to their customary independence. On the other hand their cultural expectations did not prevent the Türkmen from adapting to their new environment. In attempting to build a fleet, al-Kasim appears to have been following the example of Çaka (or Çakan) Beg of the Çavuldur Oguz in Izmir. Çaka Beg is thought to have been captured by the Byzantines after Malazgirt and educated at the palace in Istanbul, being given the aristocratic title of *protonobilissimos* when Botaniates became emperor with Süleyman-Shah's help (1078). His position is said to have deteriorated when Alexius Comnenus took the throne (1081), such that he escaped, eventually to emerge in Izmir and its environs (1086). Unlike the other Türkmen begs, however, Çaka's power was based on a naval force he had created with the aid of Greek shipbuilders from Izmir and the islands. This appears to have gained him some degree of control over the northern Aegean and the Dardanelles, despite repeated attempts by the Byzantines to stop him [Turan, 1971b:87-9; Kafesoğlu, 1953:108-111].

Çaka Beg's emergence is coincident with the Peçenek onslaught in the Balkans. Having defeated the Peçeneks who had withdrawn to the Danube River (1086), Alexius Comnenus had refused their peace offer with the intention of dealing them a final blow

(1087). Although the Peçeneks had requested help from the Kumans they were able to inflict a terrible defeat on the Byzantines before their arrival, forcing the emperor to retire to Istanbul (1087-9). When the Kumans asked for a share of the spoils, however, the Peçenek appear to have fallen out with them. The emperor once again reverted to diplomacy by inviting the Kuman begs Manyak and Tongurdak to Istanbul, where Byzantine generals of Kuman origin, namely Karaca and Uzan, hosted them. It is at this juncture that Çaka Beg appears to have made an alliance with the Peçeneks. While the Peçeneks were waiting for Çaka Beg to join them, however, the Byzantines and Kumans attacked and massacred them – men, women and children – on April 29, 1091. Those able to save their lives were christened and settled in Macedonia, east of the Vardar River, serving in the Byzantine army as *Vardoroit* [Turan, 1971b:90-2; Kafesoğlu, 1953:111-2].

According to Turan, Çaka Beg was the first Türkmen beg to have appreciated that Istanbul could not be conquered from land alone. In his opinion Çaka Beg's intention to do so can be deduced from his self-ascribed imperial title of *Basileus*. Çaka Beg appears to have married his daughter to Sultan Kılıç Arslan I (1092-1107) of the Seljuks of Anatolia. Notwithstanding, Turan thought that his assault on Abydos in the Dardanelles with siege towers threatened his son-in-law's claims on the region. Accordingly, Emperor Alexius took the opportunity to send a navy against Çaka Beg and a letter to Kılıç Arslan warning him that his father-in-law intended to usurp his domains, not those of the Byzantine Empire. As a result, Kılıç Arslan advanced on Çaka Beg who withdrew [1971b:93-5]. Kafesoğlu thought that Çaka Beg was executed by Kılıç Arslan when he visited him to ask his help against Emperor Alexius [1953:112].

#### **4.13 Central Asia**

Having become unhappy with their treatment at the hands of their Karakhanid ruler, who had begun to confiscate also the possessions of wealthier inhabitants, the people of Samarkand are said to have complained to Sultan Malik-Shah. On the instigation of a Shafi'i jurist afraid for his security, the sultan undertook a campaign that extended into Central Asia. Accordingly, he took Bokhara and then Samarkand before advancing on Kashgar whose ruler proclaimed allegiance. On route he incorporated the regions around Talas and Issyk-Köl, so that the Karakhanids now became the Seljuks' vassals (1088-9). Notwithstanding, Sultan Malik-Shah had to return to Transoxania when his commander in Samarkand fell out with the local Çiğil soldiery and returned to Khwarazm. Afraid of the sultan's wrath, the Çiğil beg invited Yakup Tekin, the brother of the Karakhanid ruler of Kashgar, thought to have been Harun Buğra Khan. While the sultan re-conquered Samarkand, however, the ruler of Kushan, Yıvaloğlu Tuğrul captured Harun Buğra Khan. Deciding against pursuit, Sultan Malik-Shah appointed Yakup Tekin to Kashgar [Kafesoğlu, 1953:119-23].

#### **4.14 Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf**

When Artuk Beg was recalled from Anatolia (1076-7), he was assigned to deal with the Shi'ite Carmathians in Ahsa and Bahrain [*Ibid.* 38]. Artuk Beg is said to have soon realized he could not fulfil his mission without replacing his horses with camels and returned to Basra. Properly equipped, he took Bahrain, then Ahsa (1076-7) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:38-9].

Artuk Beg's mission appears to have been part of a two-pronged campaign orchestrated by Sultan Malik-Shah. Although in Mecca the khutba had begun to be read in the Abbasid name (1068), after the death of Caliph al-Qa'im this had reverted to the Fatimids (1073). While Artuk Beg advanced down the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula, the commander for Khurasan arrived in Mecca with some jurists and the khutba once again was read in the Abbasid name there and in Medina (1076). Notwithstanding, there was a brief setback in Medina as the Fatimid caliphate struggled to regain its standing in Islamdom (1077). After the Abbasid khutba had been re-imposed (1079-80), during Sultan Malik-Shah's campaign in south-eastern Anatolia the Fatimid caliphs' names had been erased from the Qa'bah (1086-7). Following the Fatimid recovery in Syria and Palestine, however, the sultan appears to have called his brother Tutuṣ and the commanders Bozan, Aksungur and Çubuk to Baghdad with still others (December 1091). Before returning to Isfahan (March 1092), the sultan assigned Tutuṣ with Gawhar-A'in, Bozan and Aksungur to the conquest of the remainder of Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Similarly the caliph's former vizier seems to have been assigned with Çubuk to the conquest of the Yemen and Aden. This latter was achieved that same year by Yarınkuş, who took over the campaign when the commander Turşek died of natural causes [*Ibid.* 123-7].

#### ***4.15 Coming of the Assassins***

The leader of the Nizari Isma'ili sect, Hasan al-Sabbah's family is thought to have been originally Arabic. Although they were of the Twelver Shi'ite sect, while being educated in Rayy, Hasan al-Sabbah came under the influence of the Isma'ilis. Impressed by his intelligence and energy, the da'i for Iraq al-Ajam, Ibn Attash, is said to have suggested



he journey to Egypt (1071). Nevertheless, Hasan al-Sabbah does not appear to have left Rayy until the Seljuks intensified their pursuit of Shi'ites, going first to Isfahan (1077). From there he is thought to have travelled to Azarbayjan before arriving in Cairo (1079). When the Fatimid Caliph Mustansir appointed his younger son heir instead of the then heir apparent Nizar, possibly because he was the vizier Badr al-Jamali's son-in-law, a vociferous supporter of Nizar, Hasan al-Sabbah is thought to have been unable to remain in Cairo, returning secretly to Isfahan (May 1081) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:128-30].

Köymen was of the opinion that from the outset Hasan al-Sabbah seems to have wanted to centre his activities in Dailam, specifically Alamut. Certainly, Nizam al-Mulk is known to have assigned the governor of Rayy with the task of capturing Hasan al-Sabbah upon his return from Cairo. Pursued, Hasan al-Sabbah appears to have moved first to south-eastern Iran, where Shi'ites appear to have been in the majority. After putting an end to the local dynasty (1077), Sultan Malik-Shah had left this region in the control of various commanders who were lodged in redoubtable mountain fortresses. Hasan al-Sabbah is said to have been able to summon converts from among these as well as the local populace and begun to send out missionaries. Nevertheless, he appears next in Alamut castle (September 5, 1090). Finally ensconced in his 'eagle's nest', which he did not leave until his death, Hasan al-Sabbah launched a violent campaign of assassinations for which the batinis are remembered to this day [Köymen, 1963:211; also Kafesoğlu, 1953:130-2].

Although Alamut was besieged, when the commander Yorum-Taş died of natural causes it was lifted. Alerted to the growing problem, Sultan Malik-Shah is said to have assigned Arslan-Taş to the capture of Hasan al-Sabbah and Kızıl-Sarg to the pursuit and capture of his missionary in Kuhistan, Hussein Qa'ini. Hasan al-Sabbah, however, was able to

call on his da'i in Kazvin, who surprised Arslan-Taş with an armed force gathered from the fortifications established near Alamut (September 1092). Routed, Arslan-Taş withdrew. As for Kızıl-Sarıg, he is said to have pursued Hasan al-Sabbah's followers in towns and villages throughout Kuhistan, but news of Sultan Malik-Shah's death caused him to retire [Köymen, 1963:212; also Kafesoğlu, 1953:132-4 & Turan, 1965:246].

The sultan's death came within weeks of Nizam al-Mulk's assassination, which is commonly attributed to Hasan al-Sabbah. The vizier had made numerous enemies during some thirty years in office. Quite apart from his grip on the diwan (public financial register, thus government council) as chief officer, he had placed his numerous sons and sons-in-laws in key government positions. The vizier's retinue numbered nearly twenty thousand, inclusive of his mamluk soldiery who are better known as the Nizamiyya [Kafesoğlu, 1953:197 & 203]. This power-base, however, was dependent ultimately on his relationship to the sultan, whose guardian he had been. It is thought that Sultan Alp-Arslan bestowed the title of *atabeg* first on his vizier. In Turkic *ata* meant father, more correctly patriarch. Not surprisingly, Malik-Shah is said to have referred to Nizam al-Mulk as father. Subsequently, if a Seljukid prince was too young to govern, an *atabeg* was appointed either from among the Türkmen begs or Turkic mamluks, preferably one who had risen in the sultan's service to the position of commander.

As sultan, however, Malik-Shah does not seem to have been beyond showing his displeasure, or punishing transgressions of his authority by the vizier's dependants. Consequently, the influence Nizam al-Mulk is implied to have retained over the sultan needs to be questioned, particularly in view of Nizam al-Mulks' sons' arrogance. One such example concerns the sultan's court jester. Reports of his mimicry of Nizam al-Mulk appear to have coincided with the rumour at court that the former vizier to the

military governor of Fars was being groomed to replace Nizam al-Mulk. Angered by this, Nizam al-Mulk's son Jamal al-Mulk journeyed to Isfahan from Balkh where he was governor. Accordingly, Sultan Malik-Shah was none too pleased when Jamal al-Mulk not only scolded the jester in his presence but also had him killed subsequently by having his tongue pulled out through his neck. Not satisfied with this, Jamal al-Mulk had his father's supposed contender blinded as well. Consequently, the sultan is said to have had Jamal al-Mulk poisoned (November 1082) [Kafesoğlu, 1953:198-9].

Sav-Tekin's vizier, however, appears to have been more astute. Recommended to court, Taj al-Mulk Abu al-Ganaim became Sultan Malik-Shah's wife Tūrkan Khatun's vizier upon the death of the heir apparent Ahmad (1088). Tūrkan Khatun wanted her newly born son Mahmud to become heir apparent while Nizam al-Mulk strongly favoured the sultan's eldest living son Berk-Yaruk from his marriage to his uncle Yakuti's daughter. Given the opportunity this presented to replace Nizam al-Mulk, Taj al-Mulk is said to have joined forces with Tūrkan Khatun. Soon afterwards one of Nizam al-Mulk's sons, the governor of Marv fell out with the shihna. Publicly insulted, the shihna complained in person to the sultan who sent Taj al-Mulk and another to confront Nizam al-Mulk. The vizier's reply seems to have been quite haughty. When asked whether he thought himself partner to Sultan Malik-Shah's sovereignty and dominion, Nizam al-Mulk replied that there would not be an empire without him. Threatened by Sultan Malik-Shah with dismissal if he continued to abuse his power, the vizier is considered to have become vulnerable enough for Tūrkan Khatun and Taj al-Mulk to pave the way for a batini assassin, if he was that. Nizam al-Mulk was killed while en route to Baghdad with the sultan, Tūrkan Khatun, and her vizier Taj al-Mulk (October 15, 1092) [*Ibid.* 200-6].

Sultan Malik-Shah continued on his journey despite his vizier's demise. Although Caliph al-Muqtadi had ignored the sultan's request that he marry his daughter from Tūrkan Khatun, he appears to have had a change of heart and subsequently asked for Mah Melek through the good offices of Nizam al-Mulk (1081). The marriage had taken place after protracted negotiations (1087), producing a son, Ja'far (1088). When the caliph had ordered Mah Melek Khatun's Turkic retinue from the palace, however, she had returned home with Ja'far (1089). Most likely the caliph's expulsion of Mah Melek was due to Sultan Malik-Shah's request that his grandson be designated heir apparent [*Ibid.* 94-8 & 206-8; Kitapçı, 1994:109-56]. Once in Baghdad Sultan Malik-Shah ordered the caliph to leave (October 29, 1092). The caliph appears to have gained ten days grace to prepare for his departure through the good office of Taj al-Mulk. Before the ten days had elapsed, however, Sultan Malik-Shah fell ill while on a hunt and died at the age of 38 (November 20, 1092) [*Ibid.*].

#### ***4.16 Summary***

Turkish scholars were in agreement that because Nizam al-Mulk had been trained by the Ghaznavids and was vizier for some thirty years, Seljukid institutions were of an Irano-Islamic character. Having said that, Sümer, Kafesoğlu and Turan also argued for Turkic influences. According to Kafesoğlu, not only were some offices referred to by their Turkish names, such as *Ağacı*, which was used for *Hajib* (chamberlain), *Çavuş* for *Sarhang* (usher) and *Ulağ* or *Çuſga* (courier), but also Turkic practices were introduced. Turan agreed with this last at length [Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:398 & 1953:136-42; Turan, 1965:234ff & 237; Köymen, 1963:10-11 & 16; Sümer, 1965:94].

Turan also thought that the Seljuks' adaptation of the *iqta'* system was in line with Turkic ideology [1965:237-8 & IA Vol. 5/2:949ff]. According to him, the ruling dynasty shared out the administration of their dominion not only among themselves but also among their affiliates. This also prevented Seljuk rulers from becoming despots, unlike their Iranian predecessors or Greek counterparts [*Ibid.* 239-41]. Furthermore, he thought that the assignation of *iqta'*s by the Seljuks without reference to the caliphs established a secular trend, because *iqta'* holders came to seek the sultan's approval as well as that of the caliph's for the redistribution of land that was fallow [*Ibid.* 198 & 236]. For his part, Kafesoğlu pointed to the code of law that carried Sultan Malik-Shah's name, encompassing marriage, divorce and real estate transactions. Moreover, according to Kafesoğlu, although the qadis (judges) administered Shari law according to the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence, and were supervised by a Chief Judge (qadi al-qudat) resident in Baghdad, a ruling could be referred to the sultan for review by other qadis [IA Vol. 10:400; also 1953:149-50].

In sum, according to Turkish scholars, given that the local population was already Muslim and Islam a key element of Seljukid legitimacy, during the reigns of sultans Alp-Arslan and Malik-Shah, the character and concerns of the Great Seljuk Empire laid the foundations of Turko-Islamic civilization, which differed from its predecessors in its temporal features.

## 5. INTERREGNUM

This chapter follows Özaydın's *Sultan Muhammed Tapar Devri Selçuklu Tarihi* (498-511/1105-1118) (1990) and *Sultan Berkeyaruk Devri Selçuklu Tarihi* (485-498/1092-1104) (2001), as well as *Büyük Selçuklu Emiri Kürboğa* (2000). In the case of the Seljuks of Syria, the chapter follows Sevim's *Suriye Selçukluları I – Fetihden Tutuş'un Ölümüne Kadar* (1965) and *Suriye-Filistin Selçuklu Devleti Tarihi* (1989). Turan's *Selçuklular Zamanında Türkiye* (1971) has been referred to for Anatolia. As in the previous chapters, references to other works are for supplementary material pertinent to the events being reviewed.

### ***5.1 Contention for the Throne***

Türkan Khatun kept the sultan's death secret, offering to send back the caliph's son Ja'far by Mah Melek Khatun on condition that he accepted to have the Friday khutba read in her Mahmud's name. Mah Melek Khatun had died the previous year. At first the caliph objected that Mahmud was too young, but finally agreed. He is said to have stipulated that Üner was appointed Commander-in-Chief and reported directly to the vizier Taj al-Mulk. After the khutba had been read as agreed (November 26, 1092), Türkan Khatun set off for Isfahan, having dispatched the commanders Kür-Boğa and Kumac ahead with the royal seal. With this they were able to gain control and imprison Berk-Yaruk [Özaydın, 2001:16-8; also Köymen, 1963:72-3 & Kitapçı, 1994:163-71].

When news of the sultan's death reached Isfahan, Nizam al-Mulk's mamluks, the Nizamiyya, raided the deceased vizier's arsenals and released Berk-Yaruk, having the khutba read in his name. Before Tūrkan Khatun's arrival, however, Berk-Yaruk and his supporters, which must have included his atabeg Gümüş-Tekin and his soldiery, retired to Rayy where Nizam al-Mulk's commander Erkuş joined them with his soldiery. Once in Isfahan, Tūrkan Khatun is said to have spent millions of dinars to ensure the allegiance of her soldiery and the royal corps billeted there. However much the actual sum was it does not seem to have prevented some of the commanders from deserting Taj al-Mulk for Berk-Yaruk at the battle of Burujird (January 17, 1093). Victorious, Berk-Yaruk pursued Tūrkan Khatun's remaining forces, which appear to have fled without Taj al-Mulk, and besieged Isfahan. On the advice of her Commander-in-Chief Üner, Bilge Beg and Majd al-Mulk, Tūrkan Khatun is said to have offered Berk-Yaruk 500,000 dinars from the deceased sultan's inheritance to lift the siege. Apparently Berk-Yaruk accepted, ceding Isfahan and Fars to her in the process. During the siege Taj al-Mulk was captured and brought to Berk-Yaruk who offered him the vizierate. Although Taj al-Mulk is said to have gifted 200,000 dinars and valuables to the Nizamiyya, he was lynched for the deceased vizier's assassination on the instigation of Nizam al-Mulk's regent, Osman (February 1093). In the meantime Tūrkan Khatun appears to have approached Yakuti's son Isma'īl in Azarbayjan. Having accepted her offer of marriage, Isma'īl gathered his Türkmen forces and advanced on Berk-Yaruk with the inclusion of Sav-Tekin and also Kür-Boğa, whom Tūrkan Khatun had sent in support. However, he was defeated when his commander Yelberd and others changed sides and withdrew to Isfahan (February 1093) [Özaydın, 2001:18-22 & 2000:405; also Köymen, 1963:73 & 1966:25, Kitapçı, 1994:172-4, Turan, 1965:177 & Zetterstéen, IA Vol. 2:556ff].

Tutuş was en route to Baghdad to refresh his allegiance to Sultan Malik-Shah when he learnt of his brother's death. After the death of Süleyman-Shah, Tutuş is thought to have been reluctant to appear at court in case he was punished. Having hurried back to Damascus he sent word to the governors of Aleppo, Antakya and Urfa, namely Aksungur, Yağı-Sıyan and Bozan, who accepted to join him. Thus strengthened, Tutuş took Rahba (February 1093), then Raqqa and Habur. When he advanced on Nisibin, however, he met with resistance. On taking the city by force, Tutuş is said to have had twenty Arab commanders and two thousand people killed, including those who had sought refuge in the mosques (March 1093). From Nisibin Tutuş next advanced on Mosul where the Uqailid Ibn Quraysh had been reinstated. On her return to Isfahan, Türkan Khatun appears to have released him, possibly to gain an ally against Tutuş. Ibn Quraysh and his uncle were killed in a bloody battle outside the city even though they apparently out numbered Tutuş three to one (April 2, 1093). After this Tutuş asked Caliph al-Muqtadi to have the khutba read in his name but he refused, pointing out that he needed to gain the allegiance of the remaining Seljukids and have control of the treasury in Isfahan. Tutuş advanced on south-eastern Anatolia, apparently to prevent the Marwanids from gaining control of their former domains. Diyarbakır and its environs were assigned to Yıvaloğlu Ibrahim, Bitlis and its environs to Dilmaçoğlu Doğan-Arslan, Hisn Kayfa and its environs to Kızıl-Arslan. From here Tutuş is thought to have continued north into Azarbayjan and then Tabriz. Hearing of Tutuş's arrival, Berk-Yaruk is said to have advanced as far as Rayy. When Aksungur persuaded Bozan to defect, Tutuş withdrew to Diyarbakır then Antakya [Sevim, 1965:104-112 & Özaydın, 2001:30-6 & 2000:406; also Köymen, 1963:74-5, Kitapçı, 1994:167 & Sümer, 1965:20-1].



Although Isma'îl's name was read after Mahmud's in the Friday khutba and coins were struck with both their names, Isma'îl does not seem to have been popular with the Commander-in-Chief Üner who is thought to have felt threatened. Consequently, Isma'îl appears to have defected to Berk-Yaruk's camp where he was strangled or possibly even beheaded by Aksungur and Bozan among others (August-September, 1093) [Özaydın, 2001:22; Köymen, 1963:74; Kitapçı, 1994:174-5]. After this Berk-Yaruk seems to have decided to accompany both governors general on his journey to Baghdad (October 1093). Possibly this is why Tutuş withdrew from Antakya to Damascus (December 1093). From here Tutuş seems to have plotted with his brother Tekiş and his son Ahmad who were with Berk-Yaruk. As a result, Berk-Yaruk, who had been declared sultan (February 3, 1094), had his uncle Tekiş strangled with his own bowstring (March 1094) [Özaydın, 2001:51]. Having prepared his forces and married his eldest son Ridwan to Yağlı-Sıyan's daughter, Tutuş advanced against Aksungur with the aid of Yağlı-Sıyan (March-April 1094). When Aksungur asked for help, Sultan Berk-Yaruk sent Kür-Boğa [*Ibid.* 36; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 6:1084ff], originally one of Aksungur's mamluks [Özaydın, 2000:422], as well as a force of 2,500 Türkmén under Abukoğlu Yusuf, the military governor of Rahba, ordering Bozan to join Aksungur. The mamluk contingent, however, appears to have been quite small since with the addition of local forces from the Banu Kilab and still others from Dailam and Khurasan, Aksungur is said to have fielded at most 6,000 men. Of similar magnitude, Tutuş's forces are thought to have consisted mainly of Arabs settled in northern Syria. Although worried that his Arab contingents might desert in mid-battle, Aksungur is said to have attacked without waiting for Bozan and Kür-Boğa who were unable to cross the irrigation canal near Tel Sultan, 35 km from Aleppo. Instead Abukoğlu Yusuf and the Türkmén defected and Aksungur was captured (May 27, 1094), forcing Bozan and Kür-Boğa to seek refuge in

Aleppo. Tutuṣ is said to have had Aksungur and fourteen other commanders beheaded. Notified of the defeat, Sultan Berk-Yaruk assured Bozan and Kür-Boğa that help was on the way. When Tutuṣ besieged Aleppo, however, some of the soldiery opened the gates (May 29, 1094). Tutuṣ executed Bozan but on Üner's intervention sufficed to imprison his son-in-law Kür-Boğa and Kür-Boğa's brother Altun-Taş. Advancing on Urfa, Tutuṣ is said to have gained access by parading Bozan's head on a spear [Sevim, 1965:112-6; Özeydin, 2001:37-40 & 2000:406-7].

After İsmâ'il's demise, Türkan Khatun approached Tutuṣ with an offer of marriage, which he seems to have agreed to. Tutuṣ now advanced on Azarbayjan instead of Mosul where Sultan Berk-Yaruk is thought to have been. Although Türkan Khatun set off from Isfahan, once Tutuṣ had re-asserted his authority in Azarbayjan and began his advance on Hamadan, she was taken ill (poisoned?) and had to return. Türkan Khatun died soon afterwards (September 1094), most of her forces joining Tutuṣ as planned. Encouraged, Tutuṣ is said to have dispatched Abukoğlu Yusuf to Baghdad with orders to have the khutba read in his name. Meanwhile, Abukoğlu Yusuf's brother Yakup appears to have come upon Sultan Berk-Yaruk and defeated his 1,000-strong force. On receiving news of this Caliph al-Mustazhir (r.1094-1118) had the khutba read in Tutuṣ's name (October to November 1094). Although Berk-Yaruk was able to withdraw toward Isfahan with his atabeg Gümüş-Tekin, Porsuk and a few loyal commanders, he was not allowed in. When finally he did negotiate entry, he was tricked by Üner and imprisoned. Mahmud caught smallpox and died before the sultan could be blinded (October 1094). Released, Sultan Berk-Yaruk is said to have also fallen ill but recovered [Sevim, 1965:116-9; Özeydin, 2001:40-1].

Tutuş was unable to take Hamadan. However, when its commander Inanç yabgu gave pursuit and began to plunder his baggage train, Tutuş defeated him and took the city. In Hamadan Tutuş seems to have come across Nizam al-Mulk's son Fakhr al-Mulk, who had been ousted from Balkh by the sultan's great-uncle, Arslan-Argun. Fakhr al-Mulk had been en route to Isfahan to see his elder brother Muayyad al-Mulk when he had been attacked by one of Mahmud's commanders and forced to flee. At first Tutuş is said to have wanted him executed, but on Yağ-Sıyan's instigation instead appointed him vizier to ensure the local populace's good will. While in Hamadan, on hearing that the young sultan was ill with smallpox, Tutuş is said to have sent word for the commanders in Isfahan to join him. They seem have stalled until certain of the sultan's recovery and then to have refused. On his vizier Izz al-Mulk's death, Berk-Yaruk now appointed Izz al-Mulk's brother Muayyad al-Mulk vizier. Muayyad al-Mulk sent word throughout the empire for commanders to join the sultan (December 1094). As a result, Sultan Berk-Yaruk appears to have gathered a 30,000-strong force that included the commander of Hamadan, Inanç yabgu, who is thought to have defected while on a supply mission. Tutuş withdrew from Hamadan, taking Rayy (January-February 1095). Possibly equally mistrustful of its inhabitants, Tutuş finally seems to have accepted battle outside the city (February 26, 1095). Seeing Malik-Shah's banners on the battlefield, many of his 15,000-strong army either deserted or refrained from fighting. As for Tutuş, one of Aksungur's commanders, Sungurca beheaded him on the field [Sevim, 1965:119-21; Özaydın, 2001:41-4; Köymen, 1963:76 & 78].

## 5.2 Coming of the Crusaders

Süleyman-Shah's son Kılıç Arslan and his younger brother Davud are said to have left for Anatolia on Sultan Malik-Shah's death, with a large group of Türkmen referred to as the Yabgulu. On their arrival in Iznik, the deceased al-Kasim's brother al-Gazi handed over the city to Kılıç Arslan (1092). Not only did Byzantine forces beleaguer the city, but also his dominion extended only as far as Konya. Çaka Beg held the Aegean coast and the Danişmends Ankara, Kayseri and Sivas, eastern Anatolia being divided among various Türkmen begs of whom only those appointed by Tutuş are known for certain [Turan, 1965:95-7; also Cahen, 1989:97 & Sümer, 1990:2].

In view of Byzantine advances along the Sea of Marmara, Kılıç Arslan's first move appears to have been the establishment of good relations with Çaka Beg, whose daughter he married. As noted (see above, 4.11), although Çaka Beg's attempts to ally with the Peçenek in Thrace and thus take Istanbul had fallen through, he does not appear to have given up. Possibly he hoped to renew his onslaught with Kılıç Arslan's help. However, Kılıç Arslan's forces, which had been sent to halt a fresh Byzantine advance, were defeated and their commander captured. Whether or not aware of this, when Çaka Beg advanced north along the Dardanelles and besieged Abydos, Emperor Alexius sent an offer of peace to Kılıç Arslan, warning that his father-in-law meant to usurp his domains, not Byzantium. Although Kılıç Arslan is thought to have taken heed, rather than being killed by his son-in-law, Çaka Beg most likely withdrew when Kılıç Arslan advanced [*Ibid.* 93-8; also Kafesoğlu, 1953:112].

After this Kılıç Arslan appears to have turned his attention on Malatya, which was being ruled by the Armenian Gabriel. He is thought to have laid siege to the city to pre-empt a similar move by the Danişmends (1095/6). While thus occupied Kılıç Arslan learnt of

the arrival of the Crusaders (August/September 1096). Possibly because his brother Davud attacked and killed some 60,000 pilgrims outside Izmit, Kılıç Arslan seems to have taken his time. However, on arrival he found Iznik besieged by the Byzantines and the main body of Crusader knights (May 1097). He was forced to retire with heavy losses and the city surrendered to the Byzantines, who were under the command of the Peçenek Tadik (June 26, 1097). Having asked help from the Danişmend Gümüş-Tekin, Hasan Beg (the ruler of Kayseri) and other Türkmen begs, Kılıç Arslan rejoined battle with the Crusader knights outside Eskişehir but was unable to defeat them and once again had to withdraw with heavy losses when they were relieved (July 4, 1097). Although strengthened by the arrival of help, Kılıç Arslan was defeated one last time outside Konya (September 1097). After this he seems to have avoided shock combat against superior numbers and body armour, not to mention the knights' long lances. Hasan Beg, however, was manoeuvred against the mountain that now bears his name near Kayseri and annihilated. As a result, the Byzantines were able to re-establish their authority in the towns and cities along the Aegean, Mediterranean and Black Sea, in keeping with their agreement with the Crusaders (1097). The consequence of this being that the Türkmen were pushed back into the Anatolian steppe [*Ibid.* 98-104; also Sevim, 1989:94-8 & Köymen, 1963:288-9].

Meanwhile, in south-eastern Anatolia, Syria and Palestine, where the Crusaders were headed, Tutuş's sons were trying to establish themselves. Ridwan, who was the elder, had been en route to Rayy with his atabeg, local Arab commanders and Aksungur's former soldiery when he learnt of his father's demise. Presumed to have feared for his life, Ridwan retired to Aleppo where he appears to have negotiated the release of Kür-Boğa and his brother Altun-Taş, in return for his younger brother Dukak, Dukak's

atabeg, Yağı-Sıyan and Abukoğlu Yusuf, who all had been with Tutuş, joined him from captivity (April/May & August 1095). With their help Ridwan took Urfa after Artukoğlu (Artuk's son) Sökmen proclaimed his allegiance in Suruç. Having been given the inner citadel of Urfa, Yağı-Sıyan then began to plot against Ridwan with Tutuş's former regent, al-Kasim, who had been imprisoned by Ridwan's atabeg, his vizier and commander-in-chief, Hussein. When Hussein was alerted to their plans and returned to Aleppo, Yağı-Sıyan and al-Kasim withdrew to Antakya with Abukoğlu Yusuf (1095/6) [Sevim, 1989:83-6; Özeydin, 2000:407-8].

On Kür-Boğa and Altun-Taş's release, soldiery in the region – presumably Aksungur's, since originally Kür-Boğa had been his mamluk – are said to have joined the brothers who took Harran, immediately southeast of Urfa. They then laid siege to Nisibin further east, which along with Mosul still belonged to the Uqailids. The city fell after forty days. The brothers now besieged Mosul to the south. The Uqailid Ali asked help of Çökürmüş, but Altun-Taş defeated him. Despite this Kür-Boğa seems to have won over Çökürmüş who joined the siege. After nine months Mosul also fell (October-November 1096), its ruler fleeing to Hilla. Prevented from sacking the city, Altun-Taş is said to have detained the notables to confiscate their wealth. As a result, Kür-Boğa had his brother executed. After this Kür-Boğa also took Rahba to the south-western, having the khutba in his new iqta<sup>c</sup> read in Sultan Berk-Yaruk's name [Özeydin, 2000:408-10].

While Kür-Boğa was busy removing the last of the Uqailids, Dukak seems to have secretly gone to Damascus on invitation from its commander, Sav-Tekin. Ridwan besieged Damascus while Dukak was on campaign but was unsuccessful because of Artukoğlu Sökmen's departure for Jerusalem, which had been granted to him and his brother Il-Gazi by Tutuş. Although joined by Il-Gazi, who had been released by Dukak,

Sökmen was unable to defend Jerusalem against the Fatimids (August 1096). Undaunted by Sultan Berk-Yaruk's acceptance of Dukak as his vassal, Ridwan seems to have advanced on Damascus only to find that Dukak had been joined by Yağı-Sıyan. Presumably on Sökmen's instigation, Ridwan appears to have changed plans and moved instead on Jerusalem. Dukak is thought to have taken advantage and started to raid the environs of Aleppo (January/February 1097), but his main advance seems to have been met by Ridwan and Sökmen who defeated him and Yağı-Sıyan (March 22, 1097). As a result, Dukak accepted to have the khutba read in his brother's name [Sevim, 1989:86-90; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 6:1084ff].

Possibly disturbed by the influence the Shi'ites had over Ridwan, Hussein is said to have left Aleppo for his iqta' in Hims with his wife – Ridwan's mother – and his soldiery. Although soon afterwards Yağı-Sıyan took over Hussein's official functions, the Alawis seem to have retained their grip. Approached by the Fatimids with a promise of financial and military aid, Ridwan agreed to have the khutba read in Caliph Musta'li's name. This brought him under pressure not only from Sultan Berk-Yaruk, the Abbasid caliph and others, but also from Yağı-Sıyan and Sökmen. Consequently, Ridwan retracted, sending letters of apology (September 1097). As he was preparing for another campaign against Dukak and Hussein with the help of Yağı-Sıyan and Sökmen, news arrived of the Crusaders' approach [*Ibid.* 90-3].

Returning to Antakya before the Crusaders' arrival (October 20, 1097), Yağı-Sıyan is said to have evacuated most of its Christian inhabitants, sending his son Shams al-Dawla to ask help of Sultan Berk-Yaruk, Ridwan, Dukak, Hussein and the Banu Kilab. His younger son Muhammad was dispatched to ask help of Kür-Boğa in Mosul, as well as Artukoğlu Sökmen, Arslan-Taş, Il-Gazi Süleyman and other Türkmen begs in south-

eastern Anatolia. Dukak, his atabeg Tuğ-Tekin and Hussein appear to have responded immediately. While en route to Antakya with Shams al-Dawla, however, they came across Bohemond and Robert of Flanders who were scouring the countryside for provisions (December 31, 1097). Badly defeated, the Seljuks withdrew to Hamah near Hims from where Shams al-Dawla appears to have journeyed north to Aleppo to seek help from Ridwan, who put a local contingent with Sökmen and his Türkmén under his command (February 1098). Before they could reach Antakya, however, they were also attacked by the Crusaders and withdrew to Harim from where Ridwan's soldiery is said to have returned (March 1098). When Shams al-Dawla and Artukoğlu Sökmen also departed, to join Kür-Boğa, the Armenians massacred the town's Muslim inhabitants and took control [Özaydın, 2000:411-2].

In the meantime Godfrey of Bouillon took Urfa from the Armenians (March 10, 1098). Because a Crusader presence there is thought to have threatened his right flank, Kür-Boğa seems to have insisted on trying to take back the city. After a futile three-week siege (May 4-25, 1098), however, he is said to have relented and finally taken command of the forces gathered at Marj Dabik, north of Aleppo. These consisted of Dukak, his atabeg Tuğ-Tekin, Ridwan's atabeg Hussein, Arslan-Taş and Artukoğlu Sökmen and their soldieries. When the pilgrims outside Antakya heard of this, many panicked and left, but Bohemond persuaded the Crusader knights who included Godfrey of Bouillon from Urfa to continue the siege (May 29, 1098). Possibly Bohemond was encouraged by his secret negotiations with an Armenian armourer, Firuz, whose stocks had been confiscated by Yağrı-Sıyan as punishment for hoarding. Having come to an agreement with Bohemond through his son, Firuz is said to have allowed the Crusaders to scale and thus enter the tower he was charged with defending (June 2-3, 1098). Caught totally



unawares, Yağı-Sıyan seems to have thought that the citadel had fallen and left the city with thirty horsemen. When he learnt that his son Shams al-Dawla still held the citadel, however, he became so distraught that he repeatedly fell off his horse and was left to die by his companions. An Armenian wood-cutter is said to have beheaded him and received a bounty from Bohemond [Özaydın, 2000:413-5; also Köymen, 1963:290, Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 6:1084ff, Sevim, 1989:100-3 & Turan, 1965:179].

On learning that Antakya had fallen, Kür-Boğa dispatched advance units to Demir Köprü (al-Hadid) on the Âsi River (Orontes) and also to the fortified town of Artah. The Crusaders defending Demir Köprü were routed (June 5, 1098). From captives taken there, Kür-Boğa learnt that the citadel had not as yet fallen. His units camped outside Antakya and within a few days had the city totally besieged (June 7-10, 1098). Although Shams al-Dawla proclaimed his allegiance, Kür-Boğa replaced him with his own commander whom he charged with infiltrating the city from the citadel. Aware of the danger, Bohemond and Raymond are said to have hurriedly constructed a wall separating it from the city. This appears to have enabled Raymond of Flanders, Raymond of Normandy and Hugue of Vermandois to withstand a fierce attack launched from the citadel. As a result, Kür-Boğa is thought to have decided to starve the Crusaders into submission and decamped on to the plain from the mountainside southeast of Antakya. The knights were reduced to eating their mounts while the pilgrims made do with carrion and leaves. Growing desperate, the Crusaders seem to have sent conciliatory envoys to Dukak and Kür-Boğa while trying to persuade the Fatimids to open a second front. Their plight is underlined by William, Alberich and Lambert's flight to the port of Samandağ, which panicked the fleet into shipping anchor and putting out to sea. When William informed Alexius Comnenus that the

Crusaders had been defeated, the Byzantines preparing to relieve them returned to Istanbul, wrongly concluding that they could no longer regain parts of Syria as agreed [*Ibid.* 415-6].

Unaware of the said knights' flight, Kür-Boğa appears to have been busy with his own affairs. For reasons best known to himself, he is said to have received Ridwan's envoy Abukoğlu Yakup, whose brother Yusuf had been killed on Hussein's orders. This is thought to have made Hussein and also Dukak suspicious, weakening their allegiance to Kür-Boğa, who was doubtless in overall command despite Dukak's presence. Abukoğlu Yakup seems to have also sown dissent among the Banu Mirdas Wassab's soldiery, such that some of the Türkmén put under his command left. Confident that they would surrender from hunger, Kür-Boğa is said to have refused an offer by Peter the Hermit and Herluin to hand back Antakya in return for safe conduct home (June 27, 1098). The following day he allowed the Crusaders to leave the city in small parties, refusing to pick them off so as to annihilate their complete number. When the Crusaders attacked, however, Dukak, who is said to have received news that the Fatimids were advancing on Damascus, seems to have refused battle and departed. Consequently, Artukoğlu Sökmen and Hussein, who had been hidden in ambush, are thought to have been forced to withdraw with Kür-Boğa, who returned to Mosul via Aleppo. The Muslim irregulars who had volunteered were thus left behind to face the Crusaders who initially thought Kür-Boğa was feigning retreat (June 28, 1098). Kür-Boğa's commander in the citadel surrendered and having converted to Christianity joined Bohemond [*Ibid.* 416-8; also Sevim 88 & 103-6, Köymen, 1963:291, Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 6:1084ff and Turan, 1965:179].

### *5.3 The Rise of Muhammad Tapar*

Earlier, the sultan's great uncle Arslan-Argun, who had been assigned Khwarazm by Sultan Alp-Arslan, had tried to occupy Nishapur, but the inhabitants had resisted. Nevertheless, after having taken Balkh from Fakhr al-Mulk with the help of the commanders for Marv, Kavdan (or Kodan) and Yaruk-Taş, Arslan-Argun had gained not only Nishapur but also Tirmiz. Although effectively now in control of Khurasan as well as Khwarazm, Arslan-Argun is thought to have made it clear through Muayyad al-Mulk that he did not want to challenge Sultan Berk-Yaruk. Nevertheless, Muayyad al-Mulk seems to have persuaded the young sultan to send his uncle Böri-Pars, who is known to have advanced into Khurasan and defeated Arslan-Argun with his vizier, Muayyad al-Mulk's brother 'Imad al-Mulk, who was supported by the commanders Mas'ud and Altun-Taş (early 1095). Arslan-Argun seems to have withdrawn to Balkh rather than Khwarazm while Böri-Pars returned to Herat, which he had been assigned by Sultan Malik-Shah [Özaydın, 2001:47-51; also Köymen, 1963:77-8 and Turan, 1965:178].

On defeating Tutuş Sultan Berk-Yaruk had sent for his mother Zubaydah Khatun, despite Muayyad al-Mulk who having gained the support of a group of commanders had advised him not to do so. Majd al-Mulk Abu'l-Fadl al-Balasani, a member of the diwan who accompanied her on her journey is thought to have influenced her unfavourably by reporting on Muayyad al-Mulk. Fakhr al-Mulk, who had fallen out with his brother over their father's jewellery, was thus encouraged to send Sultan Berk-Yaruk a considerable sum of money with a request for the office of vizier. Muayyad al-Mulk was imprisoned and Fakhr al-Mulk appointed in his stead (1095). Nevertheless, Majd al-

Mulk is said to have been able to use his position to undermine Fakhr al-Mulk's authority to such an extent as to render his appointment meaningless [*Ibid.* 12-13].

Possibly encouraged by Mu'ayyad al-Mulk's demise, Arslan-Argun retook Marv with a Türkmen force. After his commander Ahur had the sultan's commander Mas'ud and his son killed by pretending to desert, Arslan-Argun captured Böri-Pars and imprisoned him in Tirmiz where he later had him strangled with his own bowstring. Böri-Pars' vizier Imad al-Mulk was also killed after having 300,000 dinars confiscated. As a result Sultan Berk-Yaruk is known to have taken his brother Sancar to Khurasan prior to appointing him malik. In the meantime Arslan-Argun seems to have been strangled by one of his slaves (February 3, 1097). As a result Sultan Berk-Yaruk is said to have pardoned his son Alp-Argun, appointing him malik of an undisclosed place, and ordered the commander for Khwarazm to join him in Iraq al-Ajam. Ekinçi appears to have left his 10,000-strong soldiery and instead gone to Marv, where he was killed while inebriated by the deceased Arslan-Argun's commanders, Kavdan and Yaruk-Taş. Afterwards they appear to have gone to Khwarazm and claimed it, saying they had been sent by Sultan Berk-Yaruk. When the sultan sent the commander Habashi, Yaruk-Taş attacked without waiting for Kavdan and captured him. On receiving news of this Kavdan's soldiery appear to have rebelled and plundered his treasury. Kavdan is said to have fled to Bokhara where he was imprisoned for a time before being released. Having apparently then joined Sancar in Balkh, he died soon afterwards. At the time Sancar was busy putting down a rebellion by Çağrı b. Süleyman's son Muhammad, who was married to one of Arslan-Argun's daughters. Muhammad whom Sancar had blinded on his capture appears to have been supported by the Ghaznavid Sultan Ibrahim (1059-99), in whose name he is said to have been attempting to gain control of Khurasan [*Ibid.* 51-3].

Before leaving for Khurasan with Sancar to deal with Arslan-Argun, Sultan Berk-Yaruk appears to have appointed Üner governor of Fars. After the siege of Isfahan Tūrkan Khatun had dispatched Üner to take the province from the Seljuks of Kirman (June/July 1094), but he had been routed by Turan-Shah who subsequently died. As a result the Shebankarids appear to have to become re-established in Fars. Nevertheless, when Üner reappeared at the head of his forces they are said to have asked help from Turan-Shah's successor, Iran-Shah (1097-1101). Once again Üner was defeated and retired to Isfahan (1098-99). Here he seems to have come under the influence of Mu'ayyad al-Mulk. On having gained his freedom, Mu'ayyad al-Mulk had sought refuge with Sancar's uterine brother Muhammad Tapar in Ganja. Muhammad Tapar had been in Baghdad when Sultan Malik-Shah died. From there he had been taken to Isfahan by Tūrkan Khatun, but had escaped during its siege by Berk-Yaruk who took him to Baghdad. On having been declared sultan, Berk-Yaruk had assigned him Ganja with an atabeg (November 1093 - February 1094). Having had his atabeg killed, Muhammad Tapar seems to have been in the process of trying to include Arran when Mu'ayyad al-Mulk joined him as vizier. Whatever Muhammad Tapar's ultimate ambitions were, it is Mu'ayyad al-Mulk who is credited with fanning the flames of contention with the sultan. In doing so he is thought to have used his intimate knowledge of the parlous state of affairs in which Sultan Berk-Yaruk found himself [*Ibid.* 11-13; also Köymen, 1963:79].

The sultan's problems seem to have stemmed from his commander Porsuk's assassination by batinis, which his sons Zengi and Ak-Böri are said to have ascribed to al-Balasani. As Muhammad Tapar advanced from Ganja after having omitted Sultan Berk-Yaruk's name from the khutba, Mu'ayyad al-Mulk's men spread word that commander Porsuk indeed had been assassinated by al-Balasani. At the same time Üner

advanced from Isfahan with a 10,000-strong force, threatening Sultan Berk-Yaruk that unless al-Balasani was handed over he would rebel. Although he was killed en route by three of his soldiers, thought to have been Turks from Khwarazm, the commanders Inanç yabgu, Bilge Beg and Toga-Yürek sent word to Porsuk's commanders to petition the sultan to hand over al-Balasani in return for their allegiance. Sultan Berk-Yaruk is said to have received their ultimatum near Hamadan. Apparently the sultan refused, but when al-Balasani was nevertheless killed he seems to have left for Rayy with 200 horsemen. The rest of his army then joined Muhammad Tapar who had arrived nearby. In Rayy, Nizam al-Mulk's and Anuş-Tekin's sons, Mansur and Yınal, joined the sultan along with his mother Zubaydah Khatun [*Ibid.* 14, 23, 54-5 & 2001:57-8; also Köymen, 1963:80].

Pursued by Muhammad Tapar, who had been strengthened with the inclusion of his soldiery, Sultan Berk-Yaruk made for Isfahan where the inhabitants are said to have refused him entry. Nevertheless, he seems to have left his mother behind in the city. After Muhammad Tapar entered Rayy (September 20, 1099), Mu'ayyad al-Mulk appears to have gone on to Isfahan where he had Zubaydah Khatun imprisoned, forcing her to sign a promissory note for 5,000 dinars. Although counselled that her death might provoke the soldiery, he then had her brought back to Rayy and strangled. The commander of Baghdad, Gawhar-A'in, and still others such as Çökürmüş in Jazira now joined Muhammad Tapar in Qumm. As a result when Muhammad Tapar sent Gawhar-A'in with a request for the khutba to be read in his name, the caliph complied (November 4, 1099). Meanwhile Berk-Yaruk appears to have plundered Wasit with Anuş-Tekin's son Yınal before advancing on Baghdad with the ruler of Hilla, Sayf al-Dawla Sadaqa. On

route he is said to have survived an assassination attempt by the commander for Isfahan [*Ibid.* 15-6 & 2001:58-60; also Köymen, 1963:80-1].

Hearing of Berk-Yaruk's approach, Gawhar-A'in, Artukoğlu Il-Gazi and others sent word for Sultan Tapar and Muayyad al-Mulk to join them in Baghdad. Instead the sultan appears to have dispatched Kür-Boğa and Çökürmüş, but the latter excused himself claiming pressing problems at home in Jazira. Upon this, the commanders sent word to Berk-Yaruk that they would not oppose him. Apparently isolated, Gawhar-A'in and Kür-Boğa likewise seem to have proclaimed their allegiances to Berk-Yaruk, returning to Baghdad with him (January 2, 1100). The city's inhabitants are said to have welcomed Sultan Berk-Yaruk who had succeeded in having the khutba read in his name a few days earlier (December 31, 1099). When the caliph sent his vizier to greet him, however, he was arrested in lieu of taxes owed by his father from Diyarbakır and Jazira. On hearing of his predicament, the caliph is said to have sent a letter threatening that the sultan should not be fooled by his inaction to date given his previous mistakes. The confrontation was resolved when the vizier promised to pay 160,000 dinars [*Ibid.* 16-8 & 2001:60-1; also Köymen, 1963:82]. Since the caliph appears to have had estates near Wasit, the 'mistakes' referred to may have been their plunder.

After having wintered in Baghdad, where he replaced Fakhr al-Mulk with al-Mahasin Dihistani, Sultan Berk-Yaruk advanced on Muhammad Tapar apparently with the support of numerous Türkmen (April 17, 1100). During the battle that ensued near Hamadan (May 15, 1100), Gawhar-A'in is said to have attacked Muhammad Tapar's left flank, which consisted of the Nizamiyya under the command of Muayyad al-Mulk, forcing the vizier to retreat. When Inanç yabgu countered by attacking Sultan Berk-Yaruk and Kür-Boğa on his left, however, Gawhar-A'in was unable to rally his troops

who were busy plundering and the sultan was defeated, having to flee with only fifty cavalry. Captured on the battlefield, the sultan's vizier was released and sent to Baghdad to arrange for the khutba to be read in Muhammad Tapar's name, which was effected (May 25, 1100). Sultan Tapar also asked for the caliph's vizier to be dismissed, which seems to have been accepted after some time. The vizier and his brothers were imprisoned and 250,000 dinars confiscated (July 10 to August 8, 1100) [*Ibid.* 18-20 & 2001:62-4; also Köymen, 1963:82-3].

Meanwhile Berk-Yaruk is said to have approached the commander for Tabaristan and Jurjan, Habashi, who had fallen foul of Sancar. Although said to have been willing, Habashi was unable to join Berk-Yaruk who instead came to his aid against Sancar with a thousand horsemen. Interestingly, Habashi's 20,000 cavalry seem to have been supported by 5,000 Isma'ili foot soldiers. Whatever the case, when Berk-Yaruk was defeated Habashi was handed over by the Türkmén in a nearby village. Having escaped to Damghan with seventeen horsemen, Berk-Yaruk seems to have been joined by Çavlı Sakavu and other commanders. As a result, he is thought to have gathered a 3,000-strong force with which he advanced on Isfahan. When Sultan Tapar arrived there before him, however, Berk-Yaruk approached Porsuk's sons, Zengi and Il-Begi for help. After a couple of months Berk-Yaruk appears in Hamadan, where Ayaz who had become commander upon Inanç yabgu's assassination also joined him. Ayaz seems to have been of the opinion that Inanç yabgu had been poisoned by Muayyad al-Mulk. Seeing the balance of power shift in favour of Berk-Yaruk, Sultan Tapar is said to have advanced on Hamadan where Berk-Yaruk received twelve consignments of weaponry on the morning before the battle, eight of which were shields for his foot soldiers. Out-numbered, Sultan Tapar lost and Muayyad al-Mulk was taken prisoner by Majd al-Mulk's



soldiery (April 5, 1101). Berk-Yaruk is said to have personally killed Muayyad al-Mulk despite an offer of 100,000 dinars for the vizierate [*Ibid.* 20-3 & 2001:64-7; also Köymen, 1963:83-4].

As Köymen points out, in contrast to Berk-Yaruk who appears to have been left to fend for himself on more than one occasion, Sultan Tapar appears to have been able to withdraw from the said battle with his personal guard of three hundred and two commanders with three thousand soldiery. Moreover, his brother Sancar now joined Sultan Tapar in Damghan. When Sancar's soldiery started to pillage the city, the inhabitants took refuge in the nearby citadel of Girdkuh. Sultan Tapar and Sancar then journeyed to Rayy where the Nizamiyya joined them. For his part Berk-Yaruk apparently attracted a massive following after his victory, said to have been 100,000-strong, which could not be supplied en route to Rayy. Whether or not this was the reason, many of the commanders now left Berk-Yaruk under various pretexts while Kür-Boğa was dispatched with a 10,000-strong force to put down Isma'il b. Yakuti's son Mawdud's rebellion [*Ibid.* 23-6 & 2001:67-8; also Köymen, 1963:85-8].

Notified of the situation, Sultan Tapar and Sancar are said to have advanced on Hamadan. Porsuk's sons refused to help Berk-Yaruk and forced him to return to Baghdad where the caliph once again had the khutba read in his name. In Baghdad Sultan Berk-Yaruk appears to have been joined by the commander for Hamadan, Ayaz, who had been relieved of his iqta' by Muhammad Tapar despite a proclamation of allegiance. Sultan Berk-Yaruk appears to have been so short of money as to have to ask the caliph for financial support. Despite an infusion of 50,000 dinars, however, the sultan's soldiery plundered Baghdad. When the sultan asked Sadaqa for one million dinars left from the Public Treasury, not to mention back taxes, Sadaqa added Kufa to

his dominion and had the khutba read in Muhammad Tapar's name. As Muhammad Tapar and Sancar approached Baghdad with the inclusion of Artukoğlu Il-Gazi, Sultan Berk-Yaruk became ill. He was evacuated on a litter but fell into a coma in Ramla, on the western shore of the Tigris where Muhammad Tapar's advance units caught up with him. They are said to have shouted across the lines that he and his soldiery were batinis, a rumour that had been circulating in Baghdad. After withdrawing from Ramla, the sultan's soldiery seems to have continued pillaging all the way to Wasit [*Ibid.* & 2001:68-71].

Although Muhammad Tapar and Sancar arrived in Baghdad and the khutba was changed yet again, they left soon afterwards due to Karakhanid incursions into Khurasan (October 23 to November 11, 1101). Köymen was of the opinion that the sultan did not as yet have commanders whose allegiance he could trust in the same way that Sancar could. Whatever the case, having recovered from his illness, Berk-Yaruk seems to have occupied some of the caliph's estates around Wasit and begun to speak ill of him, so that the caliph recalled Sultan Tapar and offered to join in the fight against Berk-Yaruk, which was turned down. Coming to Baghdad long enough to appoint a new mayor and Il-Gazi as commander, the sultan is said to have rejoined his troops. When Sultan Tapar and Berk-Yaruk met, however, the severe cold prevented battle. Next day their soldiery embraced on the field – which according to Köymen indicates that on this occasion all the soldiery was Turkic – while the sultan's commanders brokered a treaty with Berk-Yaruk's vizier (December 27, 1101). According to this treaty, Muhammad Tapar accepted Berk-Yaruk as sultan and as malik of Azarbayjan, Ganja, Diyarbakır, Jazira and Mosul, also accepted to pay 1.3 million dinars per annum in tax. In return, Sultan Berk-Yaruk accepted to help Muhammad Tapar whenever

necessary. Sultan Berk-Yaruk also accepted Sancar as malik in Khurasan [*Ibid.* 27-8 & 2001:70-3; also Köymen, 1963:88-90].

Angered at being forced to sign, Muhammad Tapar had his commanders Besmel assassinated and Ay-Tekin blinded. When the sultan's commander Yinal, who had joined the Isma'ilis, defected along with another commander, Muhammad Tapar declared himself sultan in Rayy. Nevertheless, when he took the field against Sultan Berk-Yaruk, his soldiery dispersed without bloodshed and his treasury was plundered (February/March 1102). Despite this setback, Muhammad Tapar does not appear to have had any problem entering Isfahan with eleven hundred cavalry and five hundred infantry. Once under siege, he is said to have evacuated the poor and needy but was unable to sustain his defence due to growing shortages. Leaving with his cavalry (September 25, 1102), due to the weakened state of their mounts Muhammad Tapar was caught up by Ayaz and his banners confiscated. Soon afterwards, in view of the plight of the inhabitants and attempts by the freebooters that had gathered to scale the walls, Sultan Berk-Yaruk was persuaded to lift the siege of Isfahan (October 6, 1102). Neither Muhammad Tapar nor his commander in Baghdad, Artukoğlu Il-Gazi, however, had given up their quest. When Sultan Berk-Yaruk sent Gümüş-Tekin al-Kayseri as commander to Baghdad, Il-Gazi notified his brother Sökmen and then journeyed to Hilla to secure the aid of Sadaqa. On route Sökmen is said to have taken turns pillaging the town of Tekrit with its military governor, finally setting up camp outside Baghdad in Ramla, where Il-Gazi joined him. Encouraged by a group of inhabitants, Gümüş-Tekin entered Baghdad after a forced march (December 27, 1102). The Artukids then decamped and once again began to pillage. However, when they learnt that Sadaqa was en route to Baghdad likewise pillaging, they returned to Ramla.

Gümüş-Tekin was forced to leave for Wasit and the khutba reverted to Muhammad Tapar (January 23, 1103). Sökmen and Sadaqa then appear to have forced Gümüş-Tekin out of Wasit, too [*Ibid.* 28-32 & 2001:73-7].

While Muhammad Tapar was besieged in Isfahan, five thousand fresh troops had set off from Azarbayjan under Kızoğlu, who was supported by Nizam al-Mulk's son Mansur and Mu'ayyad al-Mulk's son Muhammad. When they arrived in Rayy (October 5, 1102), however, they learnt that Muhammad Tapar had evacuated Isfahan. Nevertheless, they journeyed to Hamadan where he joined them. On learning that Sultan Berk-Yaruk was advancing on Hamadan, Muhammad Tapar is said to have split his forces in two (October 15 to November 13, 1102). One column under the command of Yinal and his brother 'Ali returned to Rayy where they forced the khutba to be read in his name while confiscating the inhabitants' goods. Having thus raised 20,000 dinars, they seem to have left Rayy (December 1102). Muhammad Tapar, on the other hand, seems to have journeyed to Ardabil on the Caspian Sea, where by his brother-in-law, the deceased Isma'il's son, joined him. Although Mawdud died unexpectedly (January 1103), his commanders proclaimed their allegiance to Muhammad Tapar who now headed back into Azarbayjan where Sultan Berk-Yaruk caught up with him, inflicting another bloodless defeat (February 19, 1103). Apparently Muhammad Tapar fled to Ahlat, from where he journeyed to Ani, then back to Tabriz, collecting fresh troops en route. It is at this point that Sultan Berk-Yaruk finally offered peace though ostensibly victorious [*Ibid.* 32-3 & 2001:77-8; also Köymen, 1963:90-2].

In Özeydin's view Berk-Yaruk was not only ill, but most likely also realized that the commanders' endless demands could no longer be met. In other words, it must have become self-evident that more than a decade of bloodshed and the now frequent

pillaging were hurrying the collapse of Seljukid dominion. On the other hand, on Özaydın's admission, the khutba was being read either in Muhammad Tapar's name or in conjunction with Berk-Yaruk's or Sancar's in all but Iraq al-Ajam. Whatever their immediate reasons, after some negotiation (January 2-31, 1104), the half-brothers effectively split the Great Seljuk Empire between them on condition that the commanders and military governors could change allegiance whenever they wanted. Accordingly, Berk-Yaruk's name was to be excluded from the khutba in towns and cities in Muhammad Tapar's dominion, correspondence between the two being conducted through their respective viziers. With the exception of Jazira and Sadaqa's dominions in Lower Mesopotamia, Iraq al-Arab and al-Ajam were to be in Berk-Yaruk's dominion while the remainder of the Great Seljuk Empire was to be Muhammad Tapar's. Finally, Muhammad Tapar was to be Great Sultan after Berk-Yaruk [*Ibid.* 34-5 & 2001:78-80; also Köymen, 1963:92].

Although Sultan Tapar's commanders handed over Isfahan to Great Sultan Berk-Yaruk who is said to have aided the sultan's men and family on their journey with 300 camels and 120 mules, the governor of Mosul, Çökürmüş, refused. After his soldiery and family had joined him in Tabriz, Sultan Tapar advanced on Mosul (October 23 to November 20, 1104). Despite the appropriate documentation, Çökürmüş claimed that subsequently Great Sultan Berk-Yaruk had ordered him not to hand over the city. While the siege was in progress, Sultan Tapar learned of Great Sultan Berk-Yaruk's death (January 28, 1105), upon which Çökürmüş proclaimed his allegiance [*Ibid.* 40-1].

Great Sultan Berk-Yaruk died of tuberculosis and haemorrhoids en route to Baghdad (December 22, 1104). In accordance with his wishes, the khutba was read in his five year old son Malik-Shah's name (January 6, 1105). When Sultan Tapar arrived in

Baghdad (February 10, 1105), Great Sultan Malik-Shah II's atabeg, Ayaz, who had withdrawn to the city's outskirts, prevaricated. Against the wishes of some of his commanders, he finally proclaimed his allegiance and Muhammad Tapar became Great Sultan (February 13, 1105) [*Ibid.* 39 & 41-2].

#### ***5.4 Anatolia, Syria and Palestine***

While Sultan Berk-Yaruk and Muhammad Tapar were fighting the First Crusade continued to advance. After Kür-Boğa's failures in Urfa and Antakya, Raymond of Toulouse took the citadel of Ruj and subsequently Godfrey of Bouillon besieged Bara, which also belonged to Ridwan. When the commander of Azaz, Omar, declared his independence, Ridwan besieged the citadel (September 1098). Through his French wife, Omar asked Godfrey for help. Although Ridwan is said to have lifted the siege when faced by the superior numbers of the Crusader army, Godfrey seems to have been equally reluctant to engage in battle and likewise withdrew. When Ridwan returned Omar capitulated, proclaiming his allegiance. By comparison, Ridwan seems to have left his commander to his own devices in Bara, whose inhabitants were massacred (November 1098). Soon afterwards Ma'arrat al-Nu'man also fell despite requests for help from both Ridwan and Hussein in Hims (December 12, 1098). After their conquest of Jerusalem (July 15, 1099), the Crusaders took further citadels strategic to the defence of Aleppo. Although Ridwan regained Qalla, Bohemond of Antakya defeated him (July 1101). With Ridwan thrown back on his remaining defences, Bohemond and Tancred are thought to have been preparing to move on Aleppo when Malatya came under pressure from Danişmend Gümüş-Tekin. Taking advantage of Bohemond's hurried departure in response to Gabriel's request, Ridwan raided the

Crusaders supply dumps while Hussein recovered some of the lesser citadels [Sevim, 1989:106-9].

Apart from Hasan Beg's defeat and death, the Danişmends appear to have been unaffected by the First Crusade. Having captured Bohemond (1101), Gümüş-Tekin also completely destroyed a relief force, which had been badly mauled en route from Iznik by Kılıç Arslan. As a result Malatya finally fell to Gümüş-Tekin despite attempts by Baldwin of Urfa to relieve the beleaguered city (1102). This seems to have prompted Kılıç Arslan to make peace with Emperor Alexius I Comnenus, ceding the territories in his possession along the Aegean and Mediterranean seas in order to secure his rear to better deal with the Danişmends and Philaretos Brachamios' heirs [Turan, 1971b:105].

Meanwhile Seljukid dominion in Syria continued to unravel. Although Ridwan is said to have settled his differences with his former atabeg, he had Hussein assassinated by three Isma'ilis during Friday prayers (May 1103). As a result, Raymond seems to have begun preparations to take Hims. Learning of this, Hussein's wife – Ridwan's mother – is said to have summoned her son. Fearful that they might suffer because of Ridwan's enmity, the city leaders invited Dukak to come. Despite Dukak's absence at the time his regent Ay-Tekin appears to have responded immediately, forcing both Ridwan and Raymond to retire. Ridwan now came under pressure from Tancred who began to systematically raid the environs of Aleppo. Reluctant to take the field, apparently Ridwan tried to pay him off but was unable to stem the pillaging. It is at this juncture that Ridwan appears to have received a request from Kılıç Arslan for supplies during his planned campaign on Antakya. Regardless of whether or not Ridwan was in a position to comply, this plan seems to have collapsed when Gümüş-Tekin released Bohemond on payment of 100,000 dinars (1103), entering into negotiations with the Byzantines for Richard's

ransom. Angered, Kılıç Arslan instead marched on Gümüş-Tekin, defeating him [Sevim, 1989:109-11; also Turan, 1971b:107 & Özaydın, 1990:59 & 76].

Evidently growing more desperate, Ridwan appears to have approached Artukoğlu Il-Gazi in Mardin, not to mention other Türkmen begs in south-eastern Anatolia and northern Syria. Il-Gazi is credited with persuading Ridwan that they could not succeed against the Crusaders without Çökürmüş's soldiery. When as a result they besieged Nisibin near Mosul in order to wrest it from Çökürmüş (presumably because he refused to help), Arslantaşoğlu was wounded and retired to his iqta<sup>c</sup> in Sincar. Although incapacitated by a stroke, Çökürmüş seems to have returned in time to subvert some of Ridwan's commanders, promising Ridwan funds and soldiery if he imprisoned Il-Gazi. Instead Ridwan appears to have asked Il-Gazi to allow Çökürmüş to join them, which he is said to have refused. More inclined to fight Sultan Berk-Yaruk and hence possibly his suggestion to move against Çökürmüş in the first place, Il-Gazi was captured by Ridwan and sent to Nisibin. When Il-Gazi's Türkmen began to pillage the immediate environs, however, Ridwan is said to have withdrawn [Sevim, 1989:113-4].

However, once the struggle between Sultan Berk-Yaruk and Muhammad Tapar was resolved, Çökürmüş appears to have acted without hesitation. Combining with Artukoğlu Sökmen, he defeated the Crusaders under Baudouin of Bourg, Joscelin of Courtenay, Bohemond and Tancred, in Harran south of Urfa, capturing Baudouin and Joscelin (May 7, 1104). Although as a result Ridwan regained many of the citadels in the environs of Aleppo and Hims, he lost all his gains when he took the field against Tancred and was defeated (April 1105). In the meantime Dukak had died of tuberculosis (1104). Although at first the khutba was read in his one year old son Tutuş's name, Dukak's atabeg, his counsellor and commander-in-chief Tuğ-Tekin (see above,



4.2) released Dukak's twelve year old brother Er-Taş and had the khutba read in his name (September 1104). Soon afterwards both Tutuş and Er-Taş's unrelated deaths, however, Tuğ-Tekin took control of Damascus and its environs on behalf of Sultan Tapar (April 1105). Around this time Danişmend Gümüş-Tekin also died (1104/5), Muhammad Tapar acceded to the Seljuk throne on Sultan Berk-Yaruk's death (1105), and Kılıç Arslan took Malatya (September 2, 1106) [Sevim, 1989:111-2 & 162-6; Özaydın, 1990:59, 90 & 99; Turan, 1971b:107].

### ***5.5 Summary***

Sümer thought the lack of a clear principle of succession among Turkic people the main reason for the interregnum and subsequent dissolution of the Great Seljuk Empire [1965:7]. Turan was of the opinion that in general contention enabled the emergence of strong rulers [1965:234-7]. He blamed the interregnum on Türkan Khatun and the commanders. According to Turan, by placing members of his family in positions of power, Nizam al-Mulk left himself open to criticism, which Türkan Khatun and her vizier took advantage of in the pursuit of their personal ambitions. As for the commanders who supported Türkan Khatun, upon her death these extended the interregnum by supporting Muhammad Tapar [*Ibid.* 169-73 & 176-82].

In Kafesoğlu's opinion, during this period the Seljukid contenders were without exception inept although courageous [IA Vol. 10:373]. Nevertheless, since in accordance with Turkic ideology dominion belonged to the ruling family rather than being solely in the sovereignty of one member, he argued that the Seljuks were unable to have an heir apparent accepted by members of their dynasty despite the efforts of their Iranian

viziers. Moreover, success indicated divine favour, so that contention arose whenever a member felt he could usurp another's sovereignty [*Ibid.* 397; also İnalcık, 1993b:37-69].

Although Köymen accepted that the sharing of dominion among dynastic members undermined sovereignty [1963:11], he was far more specific in his analysis of the period in question. In his opinion, Tutuş lost almost wholly due to lack of support from the Turkic commanders who must have felt their influence and wealth threatened by his authoritarian attitude. He also pointed out that Tutuş pillaged the Seljukid domains as if he were re-conquering these and that this may have severely lessened his chances even if due to local support for Berk-Yaruk, whose claim to the throne was initially upheld by Nizam al-Mulk's sons [*Ibid.* 76-7]. With him out of the way, according to Köymen, Sultan Berk-Yaruk's youthful inexperience allowed the Turkic commanders to gain the upper hand throughout the empire. Once the Treasury was emptied of funds these preferred to remain at home on their iqta's, particularly at harvest time, that is when they were not trying to extend their holdings at each other's expense. This attitude was emphasized on the marches, such that the break-up of the empire began among the so-called Frankish principalities established by the Crusaders during the interregnum and immediately afterwards. In the process, the diwan and civil administrators lost their prominence, while the Isma'ilis were able to further the growing anarchy in pursuit of their goals. Last but not least, Köymen thought that the interregnum of Seljukid dominion rekindled the Abbasid caliphs' hopes for political power [*Ibid.* 93-5].

Initially, Özeydın agreed with Köymen except on the caliphate. In his opinion, although bereft of temporal power, Caliph al-Mustazhir was far too interested in his personal comforts even to inspire a jihad against the Crusaders [1990:89-90], a point also made by Kafesoğlu [IA Vol. 10:397]. As for the Seljuks, Özeydın thought that in the absence

of a clear principle of succession, Berk-Yaruk, Muhammad Tapar and Sancar were too young to have received the education and experience necessary to gain either the political acumen or the allegiance of their commanders and administrators. Consequently, the men of the pen as well as those of the sword tended more and more to defect when the situation did not suit them. In addition, he thought that during the interregnum not only many valuable commanders and soldiery but also thousands of civilians lost their lives. Worse, the political, social and religious anarchy devastated the Great Seljuk Empire economically. Unable to collect taxes, the contenders resorted to confiscating the local populace's disposable wealth whenever they could, leaving them dispossessed and even hungry [1990:36-7].

Subsequently, Özaydın has agreed with Turan, Kafesoğlu and İnalçık on the historical reasons for the indeterminacy of Turkic and hence also Seljukid succession [2001:135-40]. Besides the personal ambitions of the commanders who later benefited as atabegs to Seljukid princes [*Ibid.* 154-9 & 140-7], according to Özaydın, there is also the ineptitude of Sultan Berk-Yaruk's viziers to consider, as this undermined central authority as a whole [*Ibid.* 147-54].

In sum, although in each instance their reasoning differed, Turkish scholars agreed on the main cause and general results of the interregnum.

## 6. DISSOLUTION

This chapter continues to follow Özeydın's *Sultan Muhammed Tapar Devri Selçuklu Tarihi* (498-511/1105-1118) (1990) for the reign of Sultan Tapar and Sevim's *Suriye-Filistin Selçuklu Devleti Tarihi* (1989) for the Seljuks of Syria. For the reign of Great Sultan Sancar and the Seljuks of Iraq, the chapter follows Köymen's *Büyük Selçuklu İmparatorluğu – İkinci İmparatorluk Devri* (1984). As in previous chapters, Kafesoğlu's *Harezmşahlar Devleti Tarihi* (1956), Sümer's *Oğuzlar* (1965) and Turan's *Selçuklular Zamanında Türkiye* (1971) have been referenced alongside others for supplementary material pertinent to the events being reviewed.

### ***6.1 Unruly Servants and Vassals***

One event that possibly captures the atmosphere at the beginning of Sultan Tapar's reign is the demise of commander Ayaz. A fortnight after the khutba had been read in Sultan Tapar's name, Ayaz gave a banquet in his honour (February 25, 1105). The Seljuk vassal in Hilla, Sayf al-Dawla Sadaqa also seems to have attended the banquet. After Ayaz presented valuables that had belonged to Muayyad al-Mulk, he ordered his mamluks to fetch weaponry from the armoury intended as a further mark of respect for the sultan. Presumably in a festive mood, the mamluks are said to have forced a strangely attired scribe they came upon to put on chainmail under his woollen clothing.

The scribe, however, seems to have escaped his tormentors and sought refuge with the sultan's entourage. Becoming alarmed by the scribe's sweaty, frightened demeanour, the sultan is said to have departed without notice when informed of the chainmail. The remark attributed to him: *the turbaned being armed, what state can his forces be in?* suggests suspicion of Isma'ili infiltration. In any case, under the guise of discussing Kılıç Arslan's advance in south-eastern Anatolia, Ayaz was beheaded when he presented himself at court (March 1, 1105). Ayaz's vizier also was caught and killed (May 17 to June 15, 1105) [Özaydın, 1990:43-4].

Still only 23 years old, the sultan appears to have been able to use the Porsuks' military power to further his aims. When Böri-Pars' son Mengü-Pars found himself in financial difficulties, he journeyed from Isfahan to Nihavand where on having gained the aid of the local commanders he rebelled. Although he approached the Porsuks, they had received a letter from their brother, Porsukoğlu Zengi, informing them that he would be killed if they helped. As a result, the Porsuks are said to have tricked Mengü-Pars into captivity and taken him back to Isfahan where he was imprisoned with Tekiş's sons (1105-6). One of these, Böri-Tekin seems to have subsequently escaped. Unable to gain refuge in either Aleppo or Damascus he continued to Cairo where the Fatimids put him on a retainer [*Ibid.* 44-5].

Commanders such as Isma'il, responsible for the policing of Rayy during Sultan Malik-Shah's reign, however, tried to extend or establish their authority with the aid of the Seljuks' vassals. Sultan Berk-Yaruk had assigned Isma'il to Basra, where during the interregnum he seems to have strengthened his position. When Sultan Tapar sent a tax collector, Isma'il refused him entry. As a result the sultan appears to have re-assigned the city to his long-time supporter, Sayf al-Dawla Sadaqa, ordering him to dispossess

Ismaʿil. Although on Sadaqa's instigation 400 dinars were collected, Ismaʿil arrested the ʿamil and confiscated the taxes. As a result Sadaqa besieged Basra despite Ismaʿil's proclamation of allegiance and having taken the city by force pillaged it 'from end to end' before appointing his own commander (February 10, 1106). Soon afterwards he added Tekrit in a similar manner. Situated near the Tigris between Mosul and Baghdad, Tekrit had been assigned to a certain Kaykubad from Dailam by Majd al-Mulk. Kaykubad appears to have been quite remorseless toward the inhabitants, on one occasion taking turns with Artukoğlu Sökmen to pillage his own city (1098/9). Although Sultan Tapar assigned Tekrit to Porsukoğlu Aksungur, he failed to take possession despite a seven-month siege. After this Kaykubad is said to have invited Sadaqa who duly took charge (October 1106) [*Ibid.* 45-7].

Sadaqa was a Shiʿite, which appears to have enabled those jealous of his growing power, such as the deceased governor of Antakya Yağı-Sıyan's son Muhammad, to slander him by accusing him of being an Ismaʿili sympathizer. Certainly he seems to have refused to return a local Shiʿite iqtaʿ holder, Kayhusraw, who was fearful of the sultan's wrath because he was accused of Ismaʿili sympathies. Learning that the sultan was en route from Isfahan because of his acquisition of Tekrit, Sadaqa prepared a force said to have totalled 20,000 cavalry and 30,000 infantry. When the caliph sent an envoy to Sadaqa, counselling him not to rebel and offering to mediate, he expressed concern for his life in the event of reconciliation. Presumably at the caliph's instigation, the sultan seems to have sent his own envoy to reassure him, ordering him instead to assist Çavlı Sakavu with Çökürmüş against the Crusaders. Both Sadaqa and Çökürmüş appear to have declined. Çavlı, who had a reputation for cruelty and injustice, had successfully prevented another Porsukid commander, Kür-Boğa's nephew Mawdud b. Anuş-Tekin

from dispossessing him of Khuzistan and Fars on the sultan's orders. After eight months he is said to have finally journeyed to Isfahan and begged mercy from Sultan Tapar, being assigned Rahba instead to enable him to mount a campaign against the Crusaders [*Ibid.* 47-8 & 51-3; also Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:375 & Turan, 1965:183-4].

Notwithstanding further attempts at mediation by the caliph after the fall of Shahdiz (see below, 6.2), while in Baghdad with his vizier Ahmad al-Mulk, another of Nizam al-Mulk's sons, the sultan is said to have dispatched Yağı-Sıyan's son Muhammad and his Türkmen to take Wasit from Sadaqa (December 8, 1107). Although the city was spared, the Türkmen began to systematically pillage Sadaqa's domains. Sadaqa sent his cousin, but he was defeated. While the Türkmen pursued his soldiery, killing those they could not take prisoner, another group apparently ransacked Wasit with Sadaqa's men. Muhammad stopped this and Wasit was assigned to Porsukoğlu Aksungur, who remained commander of Baghdad. Although Sultan Tapar now advanced on Sadaqa, he appears to have halted en route while the caliph tried to mediate one last time (January 18, 1108). Having finally accepted the caliph's order to obey the sultan, Sadaqa is said to have assigned his son to head an embassy [*Ibid.* 48].

Seeing reconciliation in the offing, Muhammad is said to have decided to exact a final pillage that cost him his life, also causing Sadaqa to cancel his son's embassy to the sultan. As a result, the caliph is said to have sent yet another envoy with documents signed by the sultan, pardoning Sadaqa. Possibly interpreting this as a sign of weakness, Sadaqa demanded the reinstatement of Kayhusraw as well as recompense for the Türkmen plunder. When the two armies finally met between Hilla and Wasit (March 3-4, 1108), Sadaqa and some 3,000 of his cavalry lost their lives, his cousin deserting to the Seljuks at the outset. Sultan Tapar released Sadaqa's son Dubays after he proclaimed

allegiance and promised to spare Kayhusraw's life if he could prove that he was not an Isma'ili [*Ibid.* 48-51].

## **6.2 The Assassins**

While Sadaqa was expanding his domains in Mesopotamia, Sultan Tapar set out to take the citadel of Shahdiz (February-March 1107), which threatened the capital Isfahan. As well as having imposed taxation on the local populace, the leader of the Isma'ilis in Isfahan and its environs, Hasan al-Sabbah's mentor Ibn Attash's son Ahmad (see above, 4.15), had been pillaging the surrounding countryside from Shahdiz. At first Sultan Tapar seems have been delayed by various rumours, namely that Baghdad had fallen to Kılıç Arslan and Khurasan was in turmoil. After these were proven to be unfounded, the citadel was completely surrounded (April 1107). Said to have been unable to procure supplies, Ahmad Attash seems to have asked for a fatwa, a proclamation legalizing the Isma'ili Nizari creed in accordance with Shari law. Although many jurists are said to have been favourably disposed, Sultan Tapar does not appear to have been so inclined despite sending Sa'id al-Hanafi and others to discuss the issue. He tightened the siege such that Ahmad Attash offered Shahdiz in return for safe conduct to the fortress of Khalinjan, which was further from Isfahan. When assassins sent to kill the commanders more active in the siege wounded one, however, the sultan ordered Khalinjan to be razed to the ground [*Ibid.* 79-80].

As a result Ahmad Attash is said to have asked for safe conduct to Alamut on condition that one group from Shahdiz was escorted to the fortress of Nazir and another to that of Tabas. Although the sultan complied, Ahmad Attash reneged. This appears to have



given rise to rumours that Ahmad Attash was being helped by Sa'd al-Mulk, the sultan's vizier. Whether or not he was an Isma'ili, Sultan Tapar seems to have decided that his vizier was plotting to have him assassinated. In any event, Shahdiz fell after Sa'd al-Mulk and four of his 'associates' were hanged from the city gates (July 15, 1107). Ahmad Attash's wife committed suicide by leaping from the walls, but he was captured and skinned alive after having been paraded around Isfahan [*Ibid.* 80-2].

Possibly under growing pressure to deal with the Crusaders entrenched in Syria and Palestine, after Shahdiz Sultan Tapar seems to have been content to contain the Isma'ilis, replacing those ministers in his diwan from Iraq al-Ajam and al-Arab who were suspected of being sympathizers with others from Khurasan. To be sure, his vizier Ahmad al-Mulk was dispatched with Çavlı Sakavu to besiege Alamut and a nearby fortress, but the sieges were lifted after the Isma'ilis in their vicinity were hunted down and killed (1109). This seems to have provoked an attempt on Ahmad al-Mulk's life. A few years later, Anuş-Tekin Şirgir took the fortress of Bira and having given the inhabitants safe conduct to Alamut systematically destroyed the crops throughout the region (1111). This war of attrition in the valley of Alamut and its environs, the region of Rudbar, appears to have continued until Şirgir was assigned several commanders with which to make a final assault on Alamut (July 1117). However, this also came to nothing even if due to Sultan Tapar's death (April 8, 1118) [*Ibid.* 78 & 82-4].

### ***6.3 The Crusaders***

Immediately prior to Muhammad Tapar's accession, Bohemond had returned to Europe for recruits, putting Tancred in charge of Antakya. As a result Tancred seems to have

entrusted Urfa to Richard of Salerne, pending Baudouin's release (September 1104). As noted (see above, 5.4), Baudouin had been captured by Çökürmüş (May 7, 1104). Emboldened on being left in charge of Mosul by Sultan Tapar (January 28, 1105), who is said to have been influenced in this decision by his good standing with the inhabitants, Çökürmüş now moved on Urfa, which was being defended by Richard who said to have been inexperienced if not martially inept. Certainly, a defensive sortie seems to have ended in disaster when the gates were shut behind Richard in order to prevent Çökürmüş from following his panicked soldiery into the city. Çökürmüş withdrew after destroying the harvest and killing as many field hands as possible [*Ibid.* 91-3]. Although the following year he was ordered by the sultan to support Çavlı Sakavu in a campaign against the Crusaders, like Sadaqa Çökürmüş appears to have refused (see above, 6.1). As a result, Sultan Tapar re-assigned Mosul to Çavlı (October 31, 1106). For his part Çökürmüş is said to have enlisted the help of al-Khwaja al-Kürdi in Irbil. Out-numbered, Çavlı nonetheless defeated and captured Çökürmüş and later killed him. The city dignitaries in Mosul, however, do not appear to have wanted Çavlı Sakavu and asked Kılıç Arslan, Sadaqa and Porsukoğlu Aksungur to help Çökürmüş's son Zengi to defend their city [*Ibid.* 51-3 & 93-4].

Having taken Malatya, Kılıç Arslan is thought to have gained the allegiance of the Türkmen begs in south-eastern Anatolia by laying siege to Urfa (1106). This is where he received the invitation of the inhabitants of Mosul. Although a good part of his soldiery is said to have been helping Alexius Comnenus fight Bohemond in the Balkans, when Kılıç Arslan arrived in Nisibin Çavlı withdrew and Aksungur returned to Baghdad. Sadaqa is thought to have refused the invitation from Mosul. With Sultan Tapar busy in Shahdiz, Kılıç Arslan entered Mosul uncontested and had the khutba read

in his name (March 22, 1107). Çavlı appears to have gone to Sincar and persuaded Artukoğlu Il-Gazi to help him take possession of Rahba (February 26 to May 19, 1107). While thus occupied, he received an invitation from Ridwan to join him against the Crusaders. Çavlı asked help to relieve Mosul first, which Ridwan seems to have found acceptable, joining Çavlı Sakavu as soon as he had made peace with Tancred. Although Kılıç Arslan advanced on Çavlı, the Türkmen begs are said to have left him en route because he was out-numbered. In any event, Kılıç Arslan was defeated and drowned in the Habur River while fleeing (June 3, 1107). Kılıç Arslan's son Malik-Shah was sent to Isfahan, but his youngest son, Tuğrul Arslan, was released with his mother, Aisha Khatun, who returned to Malatya [*Ibid.* 59-63; also Sevim, 1989:115-6 & Turan, 1965:108-9].

Once he was the master of Mosul, Çavlı imprisoned Il-Gazi and reneged on his agreement with Ridwan who quickly withdrew. Although Sultan Tapar had sanctioned his subsequent conquests in the environs of Mosul, Çavlı is said to have disobeyed repeated orders to send soldiery in support of the sultan's campaign against Sadaqa. As a result, after his victory over Sadaqa, the sultan ordered the Porsukid commanders, Sökmen, Mawdud and others to dispossess Çavlı of Mosul. Leaving his wife, Porsukoğlu Porsuk's daughter, to defend Mosul, Çavlı began to pillage its environs while the said commanders laid siege (April 14 to May 13, 1108). With the 1,500-strong cavalry in her command, Çavlı's wife seems to have stripped the inhabitants of whatever she could before they let in the sultan's forces (September 1108). Mawdud took command of Mosul and after imprisoning her in a tower for eight days gave Çavlı's wife safe conduct [*Ibid.* 53-4].

At this point Çavlı appears to have been joined by Sadaqa's sons Badran and Mansur, as well as the new commander for Rahba. They are thought to have persuaded him to try and establish himself in Syria because the region had insufficient Muslim soldiery to counter the Crusaders. Learning of Çavlı's intentions, Ridwan intercepted Baudouin's ransom and took counter measures. Establishing an alliance with the Arab Numayr tribe, Ridwan sent word to Tancred on learning that he had lost the citadel of Balis on the Euphrates to Çavlı (September 27, 1108). Tancred is said to have been angry with Çavlı for releasing Baudouin because this had forced him to relinquish Urfa when the Patriarch intervened on Baudouin's behalf (September 18, 1108). Thus Tancred came to face Baudouin, Joscelin and Çavlı at Tell-Bashir, with Ridwan's cavalry. Initially defeated Tancred fled, but when Çavlı's men rode off with Baudouin and Joscelin's spare horses, he returned and won the day. As a result Ridwan was able to retake Balis (November 1108) [*Ibid.* 99-102; also Sevim, 1989:116-7].

Despite the above Çavlı seems to have been able to regain the sultan's favour by capturing Tekiş's son Bektaş and handing him over, being assigned Fars as atabeg to the sultan's two-year-old son Çağrı (1108-9). The reason behind this appointment appears to have been the resurgence there of the Shebankarids. During his seven-year tenure until his death, Çavlı is considered to have secured the region for Sultan Tapar [*Ibid.* 54-8; also Merçil, 1980:92-4].

Meanwhile the jurist Fakhr al-Mulk Ammar, the ruler of Tripoli, appears to have grown desperate for help against the Crusaders who had increased their efforts to take the city (March 16 and April 13, 1108). When the Crusaders first besieged Tripoli (1104), doubtless inspired by his part in the capture of Baudouin and Joscelin (May 1104), Ammar had asked Artukoğlu Sökmen for help, promising him financial and military

support. Although Sökmen also received a similar request from Tuğ-Tekin in Damascus, which he favoured, he had died en route (October 1104). Ammar had approached Sultan Tapar next (1106), but this also came to nothing when Çökürmüş and Sadaqa failed to support Çavlı. After Sultan Tapar's victory over Sadaqa, Ammar is said to have decided to ask help personally by journeying to Baghdad. While in Damascus he learnt that his cousin had rebelled in collusion with the Fatimids. He sent word for him to be captured and imprisoned, which seems to have been effected. On his return from Baghdad, however, where he and Tuğ-Tekin's son Böri were well received by the sultan, Ammar found out that the Fatimids had seized Tripoli (August 25, 1108). Possibly because Ammar and Tuğ-Tekin were not the only ones to ask help either by letter or in person, soon afterwards Sultan Tapar sent a communication to all those who accepted his sovereignty that he intended to march on the Crusaders (November 26 to December 25, 1108) [*Ibid.* 95-8].

Some eighteen months later Sökmen al-Kutbi and Artukoğlu Il-Gazi joined Mawdud in Mosul from Ahlat and Sincar respectively, and decided to besiege Urfa (May 2-11, 1110). King Baudouin I of Jerusalem learnt of this during his siege of Beirut. After its fall (May 27, 1110), he left for Urfa with 600 knights and 300 foot soldiers, being joined en route by an army under Bertrand of St. Gilles as well as smaller groups of Crusaders. On the banks of the Euphrates Baudouin was joined by Tancred, who had 1,500 men. When they crossed the river in July, the Armenians Gog-Vasil and Apilgarip also joined, so that the Crusaders' combined forces are thought to have totalled 15,000 men. Baudouin II, who was in Urfa, informed the Crusaders that the Seljuks had withdrawn towards Harran where they clearly hoped to force a set-piece battle with the addition of Tuğ-Tekin's forces, which were still en route to Raqqa. As a result, after having

strengthened the city defences with fresh supplies and Armenian soldiery, the Crusaders retreated along the Euphrates. Informed by their scouts, the Seljuk forces gave pursuit. Although the Crusaders' leaders crossed the river safely, 5,000 of their soldiery were killed as they watched helplessly. On hearing that rather than likewise endanger themselves the Seljuk forces had reverted to their plan to besiege Urfa, Tuğ-Tekin seems to have returned to Damascus. Unable to take Urfa, the Seljuk forces eventually dispersed [*Ibid.* 103-8].

As a result of this campaign Tuğ-Tekin seems to have been forced into giving up a third of his crop to Baudouin I (August 19 to September 16, 1110), who also took Sidon and imposed a 20,000-dinar ransom per head on its inhabitants (December 4, 1110). For his part Ridwan seems to have suffered likewise for taking the opportunity to regain as many fortresses as possible and raiding the environs of Antakya. Tancred retaliated by pillaging the environs of Aleppo, driving those able to save their lives from the region. Despite several offers of money, Tancred is said to have taken half a dozen fortresses around Aleppo (December 15, 1110 to January 12, 1111). This seems to have provoked a mass exodus worsened by the conditions of peace Tancred imposed on Ridwan, who was forced to give up his annual crop as well as 20,000 dinars and ten horses. In order to prevent a further exodus Ridwan is said to have sold treasury land at rock bottom prices [*Ibid.* 108-10; also Sevim, 1989:118-20].

The Crusaders' response to the siege of Urfa caused a group of jurists, Sufis and merchants to journey from Aleppo to Baghdad. On February 17, 1111, they railed against the sultan and the caliph at the sultan's mosque, going so far as to smash the pulpit and preventing Friday prayers from being held. Sultan Tapar's administrators and commanders are said to have finally quietened the crowd with promises of help against

the Crusaders. The group and their supporters repeated their demands the following Friday at the caliph's mosque. Sultan Tapar had to intervene personally and stop the caliph from having the perpetrators punished. The caliph appears to have been more concerned with his forthcoming marriage to the sultan's sister [*Ibid.* 110-11 & 146; also Sevim, 1989:120-1].

Earlier the sultan appears to have received a Byzantine envoy proposing a co-ordinated effort to rid the Middle East of the Crusaders, but the Seljuks' campaign was as indecisive as their last. After numerous commanders once again joined Mawdud in Harran, the Seljuk forces besieged the new Crusader fortress in Tell-Bashir (July 28, 1111). However, Joscelin was able to bribe one of their number who withdrew. The main body then journeyed to Aleppo and camped outside the city walls. Possibly because he was not able to supply them, Ridwan shut the city gates when the soldiers began to requisition their needs from the local populace by force. After they had been joined by Tuğ-Tekin, the Seljuk forces journeyed to Ma'arrat al-Nu'man (September 6, 1111). The environs were once again pillaged. Having become suspicious of Tuğ-Tekin's involvement – possibly another reason why he withheld support for the Seljuk forces ostensibly sent to help him – Ridwan is thought to have tried to have him killed by some of the lesser commanders. Whether for this reason or not, Mawdud and Tuğ-Tekin appear to have been left by the remaining commanders and withdrew to nearby Jalali on the Âsi (Orontes) River. Seeing the Seljuk forces disperse, Tancred alerted Baudouin and Bertrand, but the Crusaders were defeated near Ma'arrat al-Nu'man (September 6 to October 6, 1111) [*Ibid.* 111-16; also Sevim, 1989:121-3].

The following year Mawdud is thought to have come to an understanding with the Armenians in Urfa, laying siege to the city (April 30 to May 4, 1112). As in the campaign

the year before, the Seljuk forces destroyed the crops, so that Urfa was faced with yet another year of deprivation due to the bad harvest in the intervening year. While pillaging further afield in the environs of Seruj (June 28 to July 27, 1112), however, Joscelin seems to have made a successful sortie from Urfa and driven off most of the Seljuks' horses. Although Mawdud returned and was able to get a few men on to a tower on the city walls with the help of the Armenians, Joscelin caught them by surprise [*Ibid.* 116-8].

Under pressure from Baudouin I in Jerusalem, the next year Tuğ-Tekin enlisted Mawdud's help. Joscelin had left Baudouin II in Urfa and been given Taberiyye (Tiberias). Despite Joscelin's attempts to negotiate peace, Tuğ-Tekin joined Mawdud who was supported by the Artukid Türkmén from Sincar. When they advanced on Jerusalem, they came upon the Crusaders while crossing the River Jordan and severely defeated them (June 28, 1113). Baudouin was released from captivity after having been stripped of his sword because he was not recognized. The Crusaders withdrew to Taberiyye where they remained while the Seljuk forces raided as far as Jerusalem and Jaffa (August 1113). Deciding to winter in Damascus on Tuğ-Tekin's invitation (September 6, 1113), while there Mawdud was wounded by an assassin after Friday prayers (October 10, 1113), and subsequently died (March 9-10, 1114) [*Ibid.* 118-26; also Turan, 1965:182-3].

Next year the new military governor for Mosul, Porsukoğlu Aksungur, undertook the annual Seljuk campaign on the County of Urfa (May 15, 1114), supported by Sultan Tapar's son Mas'ud and Artukoğlu Il-Gazi's son Ayaz. During the month long siege, which appears to have been quite bloody, the Seljuk forces once again systematically pillaged the fields and orchards in the surrounding countryside. In the process, however,



Aksungur seems to have arrested Ayaz on grounds that his father had not joined them as ordered and pillaged the environs of Mardin as well. Given Mas'ud's presence, possibly this was effected on the sultan's orders. Even if so it proved disastrous. On the Armenian ruler of Maraş Gog-Vasil's death his wife invited Aksungur who sent the commander for Habur, Sungur Diraz. While he was negotiating terms that would have re-established Great Seljuk dominion in the region north-west of Urfa he repulsed an attack by the Franks. Meanwhile, angered by Ayaz's arrest, Il-Gazi marched on Aksungur and defeated him (June 1114), which enabled Baudouin to gain dominion over Gog-Vasil's former domains, strengthening his position in the region [*Ibid.* 126-8].

Although Artukoğlu Il-Gazi immediately released Mas'ud, whom he had captured during his victory over Aksungur, Sultan Tapar threatened to dispossess him of his iqta'. Il-Gazi seems to have turned to Tuğ-Tekin for help. Under suspicion because of Mawdud's assassination, Tuğ-Tekin is said to have suggested that he and Il-Gazi approach Roger of Antakya. Having agreed, Il-Gazi appears to have started drinking heavily while en route home, being captured as a result by the commander of Hims, Kirhan (January 1115). When Sultan Tapar's soldiery was delayed Kirhan and Il-Gazi came to terms. Accordingly, Il-Gazi left his son Ayaz hostage against an attack on Hims by Tuğ-Tekin. On being released, however, he seems to have gathered some Türkmen from the environs of Aleppo and besieged Hims until the arrival of the sultan's forces [*Ibid.* 128-30].

In the meantime Ridwan died of tuberculosis (December 10, 1113). Consequently, Aleppo is thought to have effectively fallen into the grip of his sixteen-year-old son Alp-Arslan's atabeg, the eunuch Lü'lü. As his father appears to have done in the case of his brothers Talib and Bahram-Shah, Alp-Arslan had his brothers Mubarak-Shah and

Malik-Shah killed. Alp-Arslan did not stop there. On Sultan Tapar's request, he had the Isma'ili leader 'Tahir and his associates beheaded, confiscating their property and disposable wealth along with those of 200 their followers. Having established good relations with 'Tuğ-Tekin, who is said to have proclaimed his allegiance, he invited him to Aleppo to sort out its governance. Presumably due to his youth, however, he seems to have been unable to shake off his atabeg's influence, killing many of his father's loyal commanders before 'Tuğ-Tekin's arrival. As a result Ridwan's mother left Aleppo with 'Tuğ-Tekin for Damascus. Having gained the remaining commanders' consent, Lü'lü had Alp-Arslan killed (September 1114). This ostensibly made the six-year-old Sultan-Shah the ruler of Aleppo. Devastated by more than a decade of war, Aleppo also suffered an earthquake (November 29, 1114), which collapsed some of the city walls and a gate tower. Unable to cope with the problems, Lü'lü offered the city and its environs to Sultan Tapar [Sevim, 1989:124-36].

Sultan Tapar seems to have assigned the military governor of Hamadan, Porsukoğlu Porsuk with the multiple tasks of taking over Aleppo and dealing with the rebellious Il-Gazi and 'Tuğ-Tekin, as well as organizing the annual campaign against the Crusaders. Having started preparations during winter (January 29 to February 27, 1115), Porsuk crossed the Euphrates near Raqqa (May 7, 1115). However, when he informed Lü'lü and his commander-in-chief to prepare for the hand-over, sending the necessary documentation with the sultan's seal, they sent word to 'Tuğ-Tekin and Il-Gazi, requesting their aid. Apparently 'Tuğ-Tekin got to Aleppo while Porsuk was still in Balis. On learning that Lü'lü had joined the rebellion (June 14, 1115), Porsuk besieged and took Hama, where 'Tuğ-Tekin had left his baggage train. After being plundered for three

days and nights the city was handed over to Kirhan in Hims [Özaydın, 1990:130-1; also Sevim, 1989:136-7].

Unaware of the fate of Hama, Tuğ-Tekin and Lü'lü's commander-in-chief appear to have journeyed to Efamiya where they joined up with Il-Gazi and Roger. Informed of the size of the force under Porsuk's command, they are said to have decided there was little to be done but wait until the Seljuk forces dispersed to their iqta's for the winter. Porsuk likewise seems to have preferred to wait. At the beginning of September he appears to have feigned withdrawal so that his foes dispersed instead. Attacking a Crusader fortress between Aleppo and Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, Porsuk took it and killed everyone within. After what seems to have been a show of force outside Ma'arrat al-Nu'man and subsequently Efamiya, Porsuk turned south toward Aleppo, evidently his primary objective. Presumably confident that his foes had been duly cowed, he seems to have thrown precaution to the wind, allowing his baggage train, which was at the head of his column, to be ambushed by Roger who had been tracking him. The main force is said to have followed their baggage train into the trap, being forced to withdraw with heavy losses before dispersing (September 14, 1115) [*Ibid.* 130-5; also Sevim, 1989:137-8].

Arguably Porsuk's rout ended Great Seljuk dominion in Syria and Palestine as well as south-eastern Anatolia, allowing the emergence of vassals and then successor states [Köymen, 1963:295]. In Aleppo, Lü'lü tried to escape but was killed (1116). After a brief period under his former commander-in-chief, Yaruk-Taş, Sultan Tapar is said to have asked Il-Gazi to take charge of the city and its environs, which he did (1117/8) [Sevim, 1989:139-4]. As for Tuğ-Tekin in Damascus and Aksungur, who had been demoted to Rahba, the former journeyed to Baghdad to refresh his allegiance to the sultan (April 9

to July 31, 1116). Assigned with the task of fighting the Crusaders, Tuğ-Tekin was joined by Aksungur. On learning that Pons, the ruler of Tripoli, was in the Bekaa Valley, Tuğ-Tekin and Aksungur surprised the Crusaders and routed their unprepared forces [Özaydın, 1990:137-8]. After this, however, Tuğ-Tekin seems to have been content to maintain his position in Damascus, helping out his ally Il-Gazi in Aleppo as and when necessary [Sevim, IA Vol. 12/2:44-6].

#### ***6.4 Transoxania and the Ghaznavids***

Sancar appears to have been highly active during his uterine brother's reign. Having killed the eastern Karakhanid ruler for rebelling against the Seljuks during the interregnum, Sancar is said to have re-organized Transoxania under the Karakhanid Muhammad II, whom he instated in Samarkand under the name of Arslan Khan. However, Arslan Khan does not appear to have been popular. When the Karakhanid Omar Khan displaced Arslan Khan, Sancar pursued him personally and having defeated him in Khwarazm killed him. Nevertheless, Sagun Beg, a descendant of Ali Tekin, now challenged Arslan Khan who defeated him with Sancar's soldiery (1109-10). Finally secure, Arslan Khan appears to have pillaged the urban centres in his realm, confiscating the local inhabitants' wealth. Sancar advanced against him, but pardoned him after he dismounted and kissed the ground across the Amu-derya River (1113-14) [Özaydın, 1990:139-40].

By comparison relations between the Seljuks and Ghaznavids appear to have remained peaceful during Sultan Mas'ud III's reign (1099-1115). However, when Shirzad acceded to the Ghaznavid throne, his brother Arslan-Shah rebelled and defeated him in a battle

near the capital (February 17 to March 16, 1116). Shirzad was killed soon afterwards in a subsequent battle. Although Arslan-Shah imprisoned his remaining brothers, Bahram-Shah escaped. Unable to hold his own against Arslan-Shah, Bahram-Shah sought refuge in Kirman from where he was sent to Sancar. Although Sancar sent an envoy to Ghazna entreating Arslan-Shah to settle his differences with Bahram-Shah, he does not seem to have responded favourably. On receiving news that Sancar was mobilizing, Arslan-Shah approached Sultan Tapar. The sultan's envoy appears to have been too late to stop Sancar's army, which defeated the Ghaznavid forces deployed against them. As a result Arslan-Shah is said to have sent his mother, Sancar's sister, but without avail. Sancar defeated Arslan-Shah and having entered Ghazna instated Bahram-Shah as sultan (February 25, 1117). Although Arslan-Shah returned immediately on Sancar's departure and regained control, a Seljuk army from Balkh pursued him with Sultan Bahram-Shah, pillaging and destroying any urban centres that offered Arslan-Shah refuge. As a result, given up to the Seljuks, Arslan-Shah was strangled on Sultan Bahram-Shah's orders (September 30, 1118) [*Ibid.* 140-4].

### ***6.5 Great Sultan Sancar***

On Sultan Tapar's death after a long illness (April 9, 1118), his heir apparent, his eldest son Mahmud (b.1105) acceded to the throne. The cause of Sultan Tapar's illness is not known, but the report that his wife Gevher Khatun was strangled in her quarters on the hour of the sultan's death may explain the rumour that she had poisoned him and he knew of this. According to another rumour the sultan was afraid that if Sancar married her as was customary then his sons would never rule [Özaydın, 1990:149-51]. Gevher Khatun was Yakuti's granddaughter and as such ultimately responsible for Azarbayjan,

which she seems to have ruled through her diwan [Turan, 1965:184], so that presumably the commanders reported to her.

Although no challenges are reported from his four brothers, namely Mas'ud (b.1109), Tuğrul (b.1110), Süleyman and Selçuk-Shah, the reassignment of Dubays al-Sadaqa to Hilla and that of Mengü-Pars as shihna to Baghdad in place of Mas'ud's former atabeg Porsukoğlu Aksungur seem to have created a power vacuum in Iraq al-Arab. While Dubays gathered a force of Arabs and Kurds, Aksungur refused to hand over Baghdad and killed Mengü-Pars' brother who had come to negotiate the hand over. This conjuncture of events appears to have prompted Mas'ud's current atabeg Ay-Aba (also known as Çavuş Beg) to journey from Mosul to Baghdad and propose that Aksungur join him in a raid on Dubays. Although this seems to have failed due to Mengü-Pars siding with Dubays, Sultan Mahmud is thought to have regarded Ay-Aba's action as inciting Mas'ud to rebellion and gathered his forces. Undaunted, Ay-Aba is said to have asked for Mas'ud's domains to be expanded, gaining Azarbayjan [Sümer, IA Vol. 8:135; Köymen, IA Vol. 12/2:14-5 & 1984:30-2]. Since Tuğrul is reported in Ganja, this suggests that his atabeg Gündoğdu was deemed unsuccessful against the resurgent Georgians. Around this time the Bagratid David II married the Kıpçak Kara-Khan's son Atrak's daughter and allowed 40,000 tents to settle in Georgia, apparently taking 5,000 youths into service in his royal corps. Thus strengthened, David II is said to have refused to pay his annual tribute and forbidden seasonal Türkmen migrations, which caused many to migrate to Anatolia [Turan, 1965:183; also Minorsky, IA Vol. 12/1:267].

In the meantime Sancar declared himself sultan and marched on his nephew (June 14, 1118). He defeated and captured him near Sawa (August 14, 1119). Although he allowed Mahmud to keep the title of sultan, Sancar stripped him of Rayy, Mazandaran and

Qomis, as well as retaining the revenues from Sawa and Huy. Not satisfied with this he assigned Gilan and north-eastern Jibal to 'Tuğrul and Fars and western Khuzistan to Selçuk-Shah, creating two intermediate Seljukid dominions ostensibly subordinate to Sultan Mahmud. Last but not least, he is said to have assigned his own 'amils to determine the tax revenues due to Sultan Mahmud [Köymen, 1984:13-8; also Turan, 1965:185-7]. In short, Great Sultan Sancar is credited with creating besides the Seljukid dominions already established in Kirman and Anatolia that of Iraq, which included Azarbayjan and south-eastern Anatolia.

### ***6.6 Sultan Mahmud***

Once again the first challenge to Sultan Mahmud came from Ay-Aba, who is not reported at the battle near Sawa. Possibly in the knowledge that Dubays al-Sadaqa would support him in Hilla, Ay-Aba appears to have moved suddenly on the capital Hamadan. Despite this Sultan Mahmud was able to gather sufficient forces to defeat him at Asadabad, west of the capital (June 14, 1120). The battle seems to have enabled Porsukoğlu Aksungur to redeem himself. Apart from fighting at the forefront, he is credited with persuading Mas'ud to present himself at court. After his vizier, the renowned jurist Fakhr al-Mulk Ammar (see above, 6.3) was killed on having been captured at Asadabad, Mas'ud seems to have attempted to return to Mosul. Although he forgave his brother Mas'ud, Sultan Mahmud is thought to have retained him at court [Köymen, 1984:32-5; also Sümer, IA Vol. 8:135-6].

On learning of Ay-Aba's defeat, Dubays is said to have burnt the crops in the environs of Baghdad where he had been pillaging. When Caliph al-Mustarshid (r.1118-35)

threatened to retaliate, Dubays marched on Baghdad and the caliph appealed to Sultan Mahmud (September 1120). Despite threatening Caliph al-Mustarshid that if he did not withdraw his appeal he would consider himself free to act as he pleased, Dubays seems to have sought reconciliation on Sultan Mahmud's arrival in Baghdad (September-October 1120). Notwithstanding, the sultan occupied Hilla and Dubays was forced to seek refuge in Aleppo with his father-in-law Artukoğlu Il-Gazi. Although the sultan appears to have prepared to return to Hamadan, Caliph al-Mustarshid seems to have dissuaded him by offering to meet his military expenses for the next four months [*Ibid.* 37-40].

While in Baghdad Sultan Mahmud is said to have rewarded Porsukoğlu Aksungur with Mosul and Jazira and increased Artukoğlu Il-Gazi's iqta's. He seems to have also re-imposed non-Shari taxes that were suspended by his father. The most interesting development, however, is considered to be the embassy he sent to Great Sultan Sancar with the caliph (June 1121). At a ceremony held later that year (October 29, 1121), Caliph al-Mustarshid presented Sultan Mahmud with two swords. While these are taken to signify a reiteration of Seljukid sovereignty over worldly affairs, since they were not presented to Great Sultan Sancar – whose name does not appear to have been mentioned – the purpose of the ceremony is thought to have been divisive. After this a joint envoy was sent to Aleppo, asking Il-Gazi to divorce his daughter from Dubays. When Il-Gazi declined though he took care to reiterate his allegiance, Dubays is thought to have secretly approached the caliph. Having come to an understanding and returned to Hilla, Dubays expelled the Seljuks' shihnas and 'amils with their dependants, many being killed in the process. This turn of events appears to have forced Sultan Mahmud to dispatch a force, which re-occupied Hilla without bloodshed. Although the caliph



now asked for Dubays to be ousted from the region, the sultan accepted Dubays' brother Mansur as hostage and departed for Hamadan, having invited Aksungur to Baghdad (May 10, 1122) [*Ibid.* 43-55].

Whether or not of his own accord, Aksungur advanced on Dubays but was defeated (June 9, 1122). As a result, Caliph al-Mustarshid unilaterally removed his vizier Ibn Sadaqa at Dubays' request while the latter took Wasit, once again forcibly removing the Seljuk officials. For his part Sultan Mahmud appears to have imprisoned Mansur and asked the caliph to appoint Ahmad al-Mulk vizier in Ibn Sadaqa's place. Consequently, for a time Nizam al-Mulk's relations became viziers not only to Great Sultan Sancar and Sultan Mahmud but also to Caliph al-Mustarshid [*Ibid.* 58-61]. Although he had not suggested a replacement, Dubays seems to have chosen this appointment as an excuse to confiscate more than 100,000 head of the caliph's livestock. When the caliph objected, Dubays is said to have given him five days to have Ibn Sadaqa killed, Ahmad al-Mulk removed, Aksungur returned to Mosul and Mansur released. In response the caliph declared jihad, arming those inhabitants of Baghdad who responded to his call. Possibly most important of all, he appointed one of his chamberlains Commander-in-Chief despite the fact that on his request Aksungur returned from the Caucasus where he was on campaign with Sultan Mahmud. The remainder of the caliphal army seems to have consisted of local Arab and Türkmen leaders who accepted the caliph's call to arms with their soldiery. The Türkmen are thought to have been Togan-Arslan, the commander of Bitlis in south-eastern Anatolia, Kıpçak b. Arslan-Taş, the commander of Shehrizor, the Saltukids from Erzurum and the Buka. Notwithstanding all the pomp and circumstance, Aksungur's forces are said to have made up the majority and it was he who appears to have prepared the army for the battle at which Dubays was defeated.

Satisfied with this victory, toward the end of which he drew his sword and joined the fighting, Caliph al-Mustarshid returned to Baghdad without displacing Dubays (January to February 1123) [*Ibid.* 62-8; also Sümer, 1965:113 & 118].

Sultan Mahmud's campaign in the Caucasus appears to have been in response to Tuğrul's defeat two years earlier with Il-Gazi and Dubays, which allowed the Bagratids to take Tbilisi (1121). Nevertheless, Sultan Mahmud also seems to have been unsuccessful (1123). Turan was of the opinion that this was because Great Sultan Sancar replaced his vizier with al-Kumumi, regarded as being an enemy of Nizam al-Mulk's sons. Possibly as a result Great Sultan Sancar ordered Sultan Mahmud to dismiss his vizier Osman al-Mulk while he was still in the Caucasus, forcing him to return. Whatever the case, according to Köymen, Sultan Mahmud may have taken this opportunity to blame the caliph's unilateral actions on his vizier, Osman al-Mulk's brother Ahmad al-Mulk, and asked for him to be dismissed. Having complied with the sultan's request, in turn Caliph al-Mustarshid seems to have asked for Aksungur to be removed from Baghdad. It is at this juncture that Dubays appears to have enticed Tuğrul with the promise of his own dominion in Mesopotamia. Presumably after his defeat Sultan Mahmud removed him from Ganja, which had been assigned to him by Great Sultan Sancar (see above, 6.5). On learning of Tuğrul's arrival, Caliph al-Mustarshid is said to have instructed his vizier to mobilize and the Seljuks' new shihna Barankuş to prepare for war [*Ibid.* 69-77 & IA Vol. 12/2:14ff; also Turan, 1965:197-8].

During the following year in which Tuğrul appears to have been inactive Caliph al-Mustarshid asked for and married Great Sultan Sancar's daughter. When Tuğrul and Dubays finally advanced, the caliph took the field (March 13, 1125). This seems to have been sufficient to persuade them to withdraw without giving battle. After Dubays

secretly tried to come to an accommodation with the caliph and failed, Tuğrul and he journeyed to Khurasan for an audience with Great Sultan Sancar. On route Tuğrul is said to have exacted an extraordinary tax from the inhabitants of Hamadan, which suggests that he and Dubays were short of funds. Sultan Mahmud's whereabouts do not appear to have been known. Retaining Tuğrul at court, Great Sultan Sancar imprisoned Dubays who complained of the caliph's activities against him [*Ibid.* 75-81 & IA Vol. 12/2:14ff].

After having established a military force of some 12,000 Arab and Kurdish cavalry, Caliph al-Mustarshid began to interfere in the Seljuk administration, threatening Barankuş when he objected. As a result, the shihna journeyed to Hamadan to warn Sultan Mahmud of the caliph's ambitions for political autonomy (August 11, 1125). The sultan, however, sent a letter thanking the caliph for his recent action against Tuğrul, which he interpreted as having been conducted on his behalf. After a further exchange of envoys Caliph al-Mustarshid agreed to help Sultan Mahmud depose Great Sultan Sancar by force. When the latter learnt of this he sent his nephew a letter. Having warned him of the caliph's intention to usurp Seljukid sovereignty altogether, he reminded him that despite having defeated him in the field he had appointed him his heir apparent and given him a second daughter in marriage after the first had died. He ordered Sultan Mahmud to march on Baghdad where he was to imprison the caliph's vizier Ibn Sadaqa, kill the Kurdish soldiery and destroy the caliphal garrison. Last but not least, the envoy that brought the letter was to be appointed vizier and oversee his instructions [*Ibid.* 81-7].

Caliph al-Mustarshid refused Sultan Mahmud's proposal to journey to Baghdad on grounds that having only just emerged from famine Iraq al-Arab could not support two

armies and that he should come the next year. He then ordered the inhabitants of Baghdad to vacate the suburbs on the eastern banks of the Tigris River where he set up camp. Sultan Mahmud appears to have been surprised to learn of this development and sent an envoy who confirmed the caliph's determination to fight. Although the caliph withdrew to the western banks of the river when Sultan Mahmud advanced on Baghdad, he sent the eunuch Afif to take Wasit. The sultan countered this by sending Zengi, Sultan Malik-Shah's governor Aksungur's son [Alptekin, *IA* Vol. 13:526ff], who defeated Afif's forces in a bloody battle. On arriving in Baghdad (January 4, 1126), Sultan Mahmud sent another envoy. It seems that the caliph refused to back down and the sultan had his palace on the eastern banks pillaged. Since the caliph's concubines were still in residence there, Caliph al-Mustarshid is said to have been able to rouse the populace against the Seljuks. Having crossed the river, the caliph's soldiery attacked his palace and killed the Seljuk soldiers unable to depart in time, while the populace pillaged the homes of those normally resident in Baghdad. Caliph al-Mustarshid then crossed the river with his army (January 7, 1126). After some inconclusive skirmishes during which a caliphal commander appears to have defected, the sultan called on Zengi who ferried his soldiery into Baghdad on crafts he procured from Wasit and Basra, thus gaining advantage over the caliph's forces [Köymen, 1984:88-101; also Alptekin, *IA* Vol. 13:526ff].

As far as can be ascertained, Sultan Mahmud appears to have been reluctant to push home his advantage despite his commanders' advice, preferring to negotiate his entry into Baghdad. Once the Seljuks were back in the city the sultan requested from the caliph that the inhabitants return their plunder, which they appear to have done. Köymen was of the opinion that as a result the sultan accepted the Abbasid Caliphate's

autonomy at least in Baghdad. This seems unlikely as besides minting devalued coinage in his name, Sultan Mahmud also appointed Zengi shihna to Baghdad. In any event, after a long illness the sultan departed for Hamadan (April 12, 1126) [*Ibid.* 101-11].

Three months later Sultan Mahmud dismissed his vizier Dergüzini and imprisoned him for conspiring with the caliph's vizier Ibn Sadaqa while they were in Baghdad (July 1127). The accusation appears to have been made by Barankuş [*Ibid.* 111]. Soon afterwards Great Sultan Sancar arrived in Rayy at the head of his army and invited Sultan Mahmud there. It is not clear when Sultan Mahmud journeyed to Rayy and how long he stayed there [*Ibid.* 118-9], but as a result of their meeting Tuğrul's atabeg Şirgir was replaced by one of Great Sultan Sancar's commanders, Karasungur. Although Arran was re-assigned to Tuğrul, he appears to have stayed with Great Sultan Sancar [*Ibid.* 116 & 127]. Great Sultan Sancar also took charge of Mas'ud whom he assigned to Jurjan as amil [*Ibid.* 127-8]. Having ordered Sultan Mahmud to release Dergüzini, Great Sultan Sancar made him vizier to his daughter, the sultan's wife. He then appointed her Dubays' protector, instructing the sultan to ensure that Dubays became governor of Jazira and Syria. Apart from the caliph's enmity toward Dubays, a further problem with this was that Sultan Mahmud had assigned the said region to Zengi, who had not wanted to stay on as the shihna of Baghdad [*Ibid.* 117-24]. When Porsukoğlu Aksungur was killed by Isma'ili assassins (November 26, 1126), Sultan Mahmud left Mosul and its environs in Aksungur's son Mas'ud's hands. On his death the following year (July 1127), Aksungur's commander Çavlı who had been running Mosul sent an envoy requesting to be confirmed in Mas'ud's son's name. However, the envoy seems to have suggested Zengi instead. Sultan Mahmud is said to have agreed, appointing Zengi also atabeg to his son Alp-Arslan [Alptekin, IA Vol. 13:526ff].

Sultan Mahmud arrived in Baghdad without Dubays (January 14, 1129). The caliph not only refused to pardon Dubays as requested but also protested his appointment to Mosul as governor of Jazira and Syria in place of Zengi, offering the sultan financial compensation. At first the sultan seems to have ignored the caliph's offer and ordered Zengi to hand over Mosul to Dubays. When Zengi likewise offered the sultan money in return for being allowed to retain Mosul, however, the sultan relented. After having received Zengi in Baghdad and allowed Dubays to enter the city, Sultan Mahmud left for Hamadan with Dubays (May 25, 1129) [Köymen, 1984:134-9].

When soon afterwards Sultan Mahmud's wife died and the sultan became ill, Dubays appears to have left Hamadan for Hilla with the sultan's youngest son. The shihna for Hilla, Bihruz, does not seem to have offered any resistance and returned to Hamadan (August-September 1129). On learning that Sultan Mahmud had dispatched the commander Ahmadili to capture him, Dubays once again approached the caliph. It is thought that the open hostility of the inhabitants of Baghdad, who armed themselves against the possibility of Dubays' arrival, prevented the caliph from accepting reconciliation. Soon after Ahmadili (October 5, 1129), Sultan Mahmud also arrived in Baghdad (October 18, 1129). While Ahmadili advanced on Hilla, Dubays sent an envoy to the sultan threatening to withdraw to the desert unless the caliph agreed to a pardon. Sultan Mahmud refused and Dubays took the sultan's son with him. After news arrived that Dubays had occupied Basra and pillaged both the sultan and caliph's estates, Sultan Mahmud also dispatched the commander Kızıl. Sultan Mahmud appears to have remained in Baghdad while Ahmadili and Kızıl pursued Dubays without success (1130) [*Ibid.* 140-8].

Having left Sultan Mahmud's son with the commander of a fortress in Syria, Dubays is said to have sought refuge with the Crusaders. Apparently unsuccessful, he was later caught by the deceased Tuğ-Tekin's son Böri (July 6, 1131). On Tuğ-Tekin's death (February 11, 1128), Zengi had prepared to march on Damascus but Great Sultan Sancar's decision to assign Mosul and its environs to Dubays had forced him to abort. Subsequently he had imprisoned Böri's son, Sevinç, and taken Hama when Böri sent him in response to Zengi's request for support against the Crusaders (September 24, 1130). On learning of Dubays' capture, the caliph sent a letter to Damascus asking Böri to surrender him. Although Böri accepted, while he was waiting for the caliph's soldiery Zengi offered to release his son Sevinç with 50,000 dinars in exchange for Dubays (October 2, 1131). Having intercepted the caliph's envoy and soldiery en route to Damascus and plundered their baggage train before sending them back to Baghdad, Zengi released Dubays [Alptekin, IA Vol. 13:526ff].

While still in Baghdad, Sultan Mahmud learnt of his brother Mas'ud's approach (February 1131). Having declared his son Davud heir apparent, Sultan Mahmud prepared to leave in order to meet a possible challenge to his sovereignty despite the caliph's protestations that Dubays would return to Hilla on hearing of his departure. The caliph also refused to include Davud's name in the khutba on grounds that such a request would have to come from Great Sultan Sancar. Once back in Hamadan, however, Sultan Mahmud appears to have been successful in arranging a meeting with Mas'ud at which the brothers were reconciled. Having snubbed Great Sultan Sancar's envoy, Sultan Mahmud arrested some of his commanders and confiscated the disposable wealth of the inhabitants of Hamadan before omitting the Great Sultan's name from the khutba in Iraq al-Ajam, Azarbayjan and Arran. As he was preparing to

march on Baghdad with the intention of replacing Caliph al-Mustarshid, Sultan Mahmud fell ill and died (September 11, 1131) [Köymen, 1984:164-9 & 173].

### ***6.7 Dissension***

Although some of the commanders supported the heir apparent Davud's accession and succeeded in having the khutba read in his name outside Iraq al-Arab, the caliph refused their application. Sultan Mahmud's vizier Dergüzini also appears to have journeyed to Rayy with among others the commanders Porsukoğlu Porsuk, Kızıl, Karasungur, Karadogan and their soldiery to await Great Sultan Sancar's orders. At the time Great Sultan Sancar is known to have been in Samarkand. It appears that after the Karakhanid Arslan Khan had suffered a stroke that left him partially incapacitated his son Nasr Khan took over the affairs of state. Nasr Khan is said to have been unpopular, particularly among the Karluk who made up the majority of the Karakhanids' fighting force. When Nasr Khan was killed by an Alawi who conspired with the ra'is (head of the town militia) of Samarkand, Arslan Khan sent word to his other son (Mahmud?) in Turkistan as well as to Great Sultan Sancar. On arrival his son appears to have killed the Alawi and imprisoned the ra'is despite their proclamation of allegiance. Arslan Khan is said to have informed his father-in-law of this development and withdrawn his invitation, sending a detachment of soldiery whose attempt to assassinate Great Sultan Sancar during a hunt en route appears to have been thwarted by the Khwarazmshah Atsız. As a result, the sultan took Samarkand by force and allowed his soldiery to pillage it (April 1130), sending Arslan Khan to Marv where he died sometime afterwards. During the year or more he is thought to have spent in Samarkand, Great Sultan Sancar appears to have appointed a commander Hasan Tekin (Kılıç Tamgaç Khan) as his



regent. When Hasan 'Tekin died after his return to Khurasan, however, Great Sultan Sancar accepted Arslan Kahn's son Mahmud as the Karakhanid ruler [*Ibid.* 158-63 & 174-5; also Kafesoğlu, 1956:45-6 & 50].

On Davud's accession Mas'ud appears to have journeyed to Shehrizor and gained the support of its commander Kıpçak (see above, 6.6). With these Türkmen he seems to have taken Tabriz where for a time his nephew besieged him (October 1131). Davud is thought to have retired when his commanders decided to support Mas'ud instead. Mas'ud is next reported in Hamadan, from where he requested that the caliph have the khutba read in his name. The caliph refused on grounds that such a request had to come first from Great Sultan Sancar. In the meantime Zengi is said to have agreed to support Mas'ud. Soon afterwards Selçuk-Shah arrived in Baghdad at the head of his forces from Fars and Khuzistan (which may also have been Türkmen). Although the caliph allowed Selçuk-Shah to take up residence in the Seljuk palace in Baghdad he does not appear to have included his name in the khutba. While Mas'ud waited en route to Baghdad for Zengi to join him, Selçuk-Shah's atabeg Karaca attacked and defeated Zengi near Samarra. As a result Mas'ud appears to have come to an agreement with his brother Selçuk-Shah and Caliph al-Mustarshid to topple Great Sultan Sancar who they learnt had arrived in Rayy at the head of his army (January-February 1132). Accordingly, although Mas'ud was to be sultan and Selçuk-Shah his heir apparent, Iraq al-Arab was to be ruled by the caliph's regent. When the caliph followed Mas'ud and Selçuk-Shah out of Baghdad (March 27, 1132), however, he did not have their names included in the khutba from which Great Sultan Sancar's was omitted [*Ibid.* 176-81, 185 & 190; Sümer, IA Vol. 8:136 & 1965:113; Alptekin, IA Vol. 13:526ff].

Caliph al-Mustarshid did not join Mas'ud and Selçuk-Shah, camping outside Baghdad with his soldiery before advancing to Hanikin near Halvan (May 21, 1132). The reason for this may have been Great Sultan Sancar's order for Zengi and Dubays to attack Iraq al-Arab (Baghdad?) while he advanced with Tuğrul from Hamadan. Without Zengi or the caliph, Mas'ud seems to have decided that it was better to retreat to Azarbayjan. Certainly when Great Sultan Sancar cut off the route north near Dinavar, Mas'ud and Selçuk-Shah are said to have waited for the caliph and his soldiery before being forced to give battle (May 26, 1132). Although Karaca followed Kızıl's central attack on Great Sultan Sancar, Tuğrul and the Khwarazmshah Atsız surrounded Mas'ud and Selçuk-Shah's forces from the flanks. Mas'ud is said to have fled, but it appears he returned on Great Sultan Sancar's inducement and was assigned Azarbayjan. There is no mention of Selçuk-Shah. Tuğrul was appointed sultan with Dergüzini as his vizier. As for Karaca, he and Yusuf Çavuş were beheaded. After this Great Sultan Sancar returned to Khurasan, arriving in Nishapur on August 5, 1132 [*Ibid.* 191-200; also Sümer, IA Vol. 8:136].

For his part Caliph al-Mustarshid appears to have returned to Baghdad on learning of Zengi and Dubays' approach. In the ensuing battle near Baghdad Zengi and Dubays are thought to have been defeated due to the reluctance of their soldiery to fight the caliph who is said to have donned the Prophet's vest. Whatever the case, Zengi retreated to Tekrit and Dubays returned to Hilla. When Zengi offered peace Caliph al-Mustarshid demanded that he handed over Dubays, threatening to take Mosul by force if he did not comply. Although Zengi did not, Dubays seems to have been unable to re-establish himself in Hilla, which the caliph had assigned to his commander Iqbal. When his

soldiery joined him in Wasit, Iqbal and Barankuş Bazdar are said to have defeated Dubays [*Ibid.* 200-3; also Alptekin, IA Vol. 13:526ff].

Meanwhile Davud, who appears to have remained in Tabriz throughout this period, advanced on Hamadan after the deceased Karaca's sons and his father's former commander Barankuş Zakavi joined him. Once there, however, the commander Belengeri and his brothers deserted Davud whose forces were defeated by Tuğrul. Davud fled to Baghdad with his atabeg Ahmadili (July-August 1132), where Mas'ud joined him from Ganja and took up residence in the Seljuk palace (December 1132). After the caliph had the khutba read in Mas'ud's and his heir apparent Davud's names, Mas'ud and his nephew departed for Azarbayjan with the caliph's commander Nazar and his soldiery (January 27, 1133). In Azarbayjan Mas'ud defeated Sultan Tuğrul's regent Karasungur after which those iqta' holders who were not killed in the fighting fled. Mas'ud then advanced on Hamadan and having defeated Sultan Tuğrul occupied the capital where apparently he had Davud's atabeg Ahmadili assassinated by Isma'ilis (May 25, 1133). Sultan Tuğrul fled to Rayy where the commanders whose iqta's in Azarbayjan had been confiscated joined him. When he journeyed to Isfahan, however, he met with resistance from the inhabitants and was forced to return to Rayy where he had his vizier Dergüzini killed. Pursued by Mas'ud's forces and possibly defeated en route back to Rayy, Sultan Tuğrul is thought to have spent the winter in Tabaristan before returning with Dubays the following year. In the intervening months Sultan Tuğrul appears to have been able to gain the confidence of Mas'ud's commanders who deserted him on the battlefield (June 1134). Having fled, Mas'ud reached Baghdad dressed as a Türkmen [*Ibid.* 203-15 & 237-41; Sümer, IA Vol. 8:137].

Possibly encouraged by Mas'ud's initial victory over Sultan Tuğrul, the caliph had advanced on Zengi with Mas'ud's permission and the support of thirty Turkic (and Türkmen?) commanders (June 1133). Having arrived outside Mosul (July 26, 1133) the caliph besieged the city for 80 days but without success. After he had returned to Baghdad, Zengi sought to appease the caliph with gifts while attacking and defeating the commander of Hisn Kayfa, who had helped the caliph (April 26, 1134) [*Ibid.* 215-8; Alptekin, IA Vol. 13:526ff]. Mas'ud remained in Baghdad despite pressure by the caliph to advance on Sultan Tuğrul in Hamadan. Selçuk-Shah also appears to have been in Baghdad at the time. When the caliph discovered that the commanders who had supported him against Zengi had been in touch with Sultan Tuğrul, he arrested one of them but this caused the remainder to defect to Mas'ud. As a result Caliph al-Mustarshid asked Mas'ud to leave (October 15, 1134), but Mas'ud appears to have camped outside Baghdad. He is said to have remained there despite a gift of 30,000 dinars from the caliph, presumably in aid of his campaign against Sultan Tuğrul [*Ibid.* 242-7; Sümer, IA Vol. 8:137].

Mas'ud journeyed to Hamadan only after receiving news of Sultan Tuğrul's sudden death (October 24, 1134). His arrival appears to have prevented commanders such as Kızıl, Sungur and Barankuş Bazdar from deciding on their own Seljukid candidate. These and other commanders are said to have been opposed to Mas'ud due to his wife, Sultan Berk-Yaruk's daughter Zubaydah Khatun's patronage of Karasungur, Sultan Tuğrul's former regent in Azarbayjan, whom Mas'ud had ousted. With Sultan Tuğrul dead, Great Sultan Sancar clearly accepted Mas'ud's accession, ordering him to behead among others the commanders Porsukoğlu Porsuk, Kızıl and Barankuş Bazdar whom he seems to have blamed for Sultan Tuğrul's problems. Instead of following Great

Sultan Sancar's order, however, apparently Sultan Mas'ud showed the letter to the commanders in an attempt to gain their confidence. Presumably because Davud's commanders also proclaimed their allegiance to Sultan Mas'ud, these commanders are said to have asked the caliph to send them a Seljukid prince of his choice (Selçuk-Shah?) to lead them against Sultan Mas'ud from Porsukoğlu Porsuk's iqta' in Khuzistan [*Ibid.* 248-53; Sümer, IA Vol. 8:137].

Presumably because Dubays was with them, at first the caliph appears to have refused their approach. After they tried to capture Dubays and he escaped to rejoin Sultan Mas'ud, the caliph sent word that he was on his way. On learning of this Sultan Mas'ud is said to have advanced on Khuzistan, which caused the commanders to flee to Baghdad. After having confiscated the commanders' property, Sultan Mas'ud pillaged Porsukoğlu Porsuk's iqta'. At this juncture Zengi appears to have sent his son to the caliph with the keys of Mosul (November 20, 1134). Although Dubays also sent an envoy requesting to be pardoned, this was refused (November 21, 1134). Soon afterwards the shihna for Basra, Beg-Aba, seems to have proclaimed his allegiance to Caliph al-Mustarshid. When Sultan Mas'ud's advance units appeared near Hulvan under Dubays' command, the caliph asked Zengi and Beg-Aba to join him and sent out his own advance units. Dubays who had received reinforcements from the sultan defeated these and they returned to Baghdad (May 4, 1135). After replacing Great Sultan Sancar and Sultan Mas'ud's names with Davud's in the khutba, the caliph asked for and gained a fatwa from jurists in Baghdad for war on Sultan Mas'ud. Despite his vizier's advice to the contrary, Caliph al-Mustarshid finally gave the order to advance (May 25, 1135). On route Beg-Aba deserted to Sultan Mas'ud, but Porsukoğlu Porsuk joined with his soldiery. Nevertheless, the caliph seems to have made slow progress, providing Sultan

Mas'ud with the opportunity to entice the 'Turkic commanders leading his forces with the promise of new iqta's [*Ibid.* 255-60; Sümer, IA Vol. 8:137-8].

On learning that Sultan Mas'ud was approaching at the head of his forces, Caliph al-Mustarshid is said to have held a war council in Kirmanshah (June 22, 1135). The purpose of this appears to have been to persuade his vizier and the commanders to turn back. Advised that it was now too late, the caliph accepted battle (June 24, 1135). It seems that many of the 'Turkic commanders defected or begged mercy and as a result the caliph was captured. When Sultan Mas'ud ordered those non-'Turkic soldieries that had remained with the caliph to be killed they appear to have fled. Having brought the caliph to Hamadan, Sultan Mas'ud gave him an ultimatum. Caliph al-Mustarshid was to pay an undisclosed sum in war reparations, disband his remaining soldiery and never campaign again. Sultan Mas'ud also appointed Beg-Aba shihna to Baghdad where his arrival seems to have caused riots, resulting in some 150 inhabitants losing their lives at the hands of the Seljuks' soldiery. Beg-Aba had the city walls partially destroyed and took over the caliph's fledgling administration in Iraq al-Arab. After a brief campaign to Azarbayjan (July 1135), Sultan Mas'ud is said to have received a letter from Great Sultan Sancar directing him to return the caliph to Baghdad after surrendering Dubays to him (July 13, 1135). Instead Sultan Mas'ud persuaded the caliph to pardon Dubays before preparations were begun for his return. While these were in progress, allegedly a military detachment sent by Great Sultan Sancar arrived. During the ceremony welcoming its commander, Caliph al-Mustarshid is said to have been maimed and then killed by seventeen Isma'ilis of whom seven were caught (August 29 or 31, 1135). Soon afterwards Sultan Mas'ud appears to have had Dubays killed for the caliph's murder [*Ibid.* 270-83; Sümer, IA Vol. 8:138; Turan, 1965:199].

Whether or not as claimed the Seljuks had the caliph killed, his death remained a source of contention between the two houses. Possibly because the amount was excessive, Caliph al-Rashid rejected to pay his father's promissory note for war reparations, which was presented to him on behalf of Sultan Mas'ud by Barankuş Zakavi (October 29, 1135). When Barankuş insisted, he and Beg-Aba were forcibly ejected from Baghdad and the Seljuks' palace pillaged. Beg-Aba retired to Wasit and Barankuş returned to Hamadan. Soon afterwards Davud arrived in Baghdad (October 14, 1135). Zengi followed with his charge Alp-Arslan whom he wanted declared sultan. Those commanders opposed to Sultan Mas'ud then joined them. After some delay Davud's name replaced Great Sultan Sancar and Sultan Mas'ud's in the khutba (November 22, 1135). When Caliph al-Rashid arrested his father's trusted commander Iqbal and confiscated his wealth, however, Zengi demanded his release. After he had secured this, he demanded and received the money the caliph had confiscated from Iqbal. Zengi then consolidated his influence by appointing Davud's vizier. The caliph left Baghdad at the head of his forces to meet Sultan Mas'ud (May 27, 1136), but Zengi appears to have remained behind. On learning from Zengi that Sultan Mas'ud was planning a surprise raid, the caliph and his forces returned to Baghdad (June 7, 1136). Zengi defeated Sultan Mas'ud's advance units. Although at first the sultan seems to have been unable to gain the confidence of the caliph's Turkic commanders, apparently he was able to sow distrust between them. On realizing this Zengi is said to have decided to leave for Mosul, offering the caliph refuge there. Possibly afraid that he would be killed like his father had been, Caliph al-Rashid appears to have accepted this offer (August 14, 1136) [*Ibid.* 285-96; Alptekin, IA Vol. 13:526ff; Sümer, IA Vol. 8:138; Kafesoğlu, 1956:26].

As a result, after having besieged Baghdad for fifty days Sultan Mas'ud entered the city (August 15, 1136). Once he had established order, he appointed al-Muqtafi caliph (August 18, 1136). Sultan Mas'ud then confiscated the caliph's horses and treasury, including the jewellery of his harem. After Great Sultan Sancar had recognized Caliph al-Muqtafi, he ordered Sultan Mas'ud to ask Zengi to expel al-Rashid from Mosul. Thus ousted, while in Sincar al-Rashid is said to have sought help from Sultan Mas'ud (1116-56) of the Seljuk Sultanate of Anatolia, not to mention the Danişmendid Muhammad (1134-42), but without success. Once in Azarbayjan, however, Davud and the governors of Fars and Khuzistan, Mengü-Pars and Boz-Aba, ostensibly took up his cause. Sultan Mas'ud sent Karasungur to Azarbayjan, but when he was repelled the sultan advanced from Baghdad and defeated Davud, having Mengü-Pars killed immediately. While the sultan's forces were busy pillaging, however, Boz-Aba counter-attacked and captured most of the commanders, having them killed to avenge Mengü-Pars. Sultan Mas'ud fled to Azarbayjan while Davud quickly occupied Hamadan. Evidently in charge, Boz-Aba appears to have decided to occupy Mengü-Pars's iqta' instead of either pursuing Sultan Mas'ud or occupying Baghdad. Consequently, Davud and al-Rashid seem to have journeyed to Fars with Boz-Aba. While subsequently preparing to march on Isfahan, allegedly al-Rashid was assassinated by the Isma'ilis (June 8, 1138) [*Ibid.* 298-305; also Sümer, *IA* Vol. 8:138, Turan, 1965:199 & Kafesoğlu, 1956:26].

### ***6.8 Defeat at Katvan***

While Sultan Mas'ud was struggling to assert his sovereignty over Iraq and Azarbayjan, Great Sultan Sancar was forced to reassert his authority over the Ghaznavids and the Khwarazmshah. First he appears to have set out against Sultan Bahram-Shah for



withholding the annual tribute (August-September, 1135). When Great Sultan Sancar arrived outside Ghazna despite the onset of winter, Sultan Bahram-Shah asked to be pardoned. Nonetheless, he seems to have balked at proclaiming his allegiance in person and withdrawn to India. Great Sultan Sancar entered Ghazna uncontested and having collected the taxes due confiscated all the removable wealth therein. He returned to Khurasan after receiving another envoy from Sultan Bahram-Shah and ostensibly pardoning him (July 1136) [*Ibid.* 306-11].

As on the campaign to Iraq al-Ajam, which ended with the battle at Dinavar (May 26, 1132), the Khwarazmshah Atsız accompanied the sultan to Ghazna. Prior to that, Atsız is credited with discovering the plot by the Karakhanid Arslan-Khan to have Great Sultan Sancar killed while in Transoxania (1130). Although Köymen cited the commanders' jealousy of Atsız's fame and standing as having influenced the sultan against him, which he argues Atsız became aware of during the campaign to Ghazna, Kafesoğlu discounted these reports as the reason for Atsız's behaviour on returning from Ghazna. Whatever the cause, Atsız appears to have started a many faceted campaign. While extending his dominion in bloody battles against the Türkmen on the Mankishlag peninsula on the north-eastern coast of the Caspian Sea and toward Jand, he is said to have tried to affiliate also the Türkmen in the environs of Marv, the Seljuk capital. When the sultan accused Atsız of spilling Muslim blood without his permission, Atsız arrested the Seljuk officials in Khwarazm and confiscated their wealth [*Ibid.* 311-4; Kafesoğlu, 1956:47; Sümer, 1965:102-3].

Great Sultan Sancar embarked on the campaign to Khwarazm from Balkh (September 1138). Having opened the irrigation canals and flooded the surrounding countryside along the Amu-Darya, Atsız awaited the sultan at the fortress of Hezaresb, en route to

his capital Gurganj. Although M. A Köymen argued that the sultan progressed slowly in order to give Atsız an opportunity to desist, Kafesoğlu was of the opinion that due to the flooding Great Sultan Sancar was forced to traverse the desert in order to reach Hezaresb, which was on the river. At the battle that took place (November 16, 1138), the Khwarazmian soldiery dispersed and Atsız was forced to flee. The sultan had Atsız's son Atlig, who was among the captured, killed. Similar to the death of Caliph al-Mustarshid, this remained a cause for contention between the Khwarazmshahs and the Seljuks. Although Great Sultan Sancar re-occupied Khwarazm and assigned it to his youngest nephew (February 1139), Atsız returned and having defeated Süleyman-Shah forced him to flee with the Seljuk commanders and officials. Soon afterwards he raided Bokhara, capturing and killing its governor and partially destroying the city walls [*Ibid.* 318-20; Kafesoğlu, 1956:48-9].

Meanwhile the Jurchen had superseded the Khitay, who had founded the Liao dynasty in northern China (936-1122). Although many of the Khitay accepted Jurchen rule, a small group led by Yeh-lü Tah-shi, a member of the Khitay dynasty, fled westward into the Tarim Basin (1123). Having subjugated the Uygurs in Turfan, Kuça and Beşbalig, the Khitay attempted to incorporate Kashgar. Unable to expand south against the Sung dynasty, the Khitay had attempted and failed to conquer Kashgar and the Issyk-Köl region once before (1017). This time the Karakhanid Arslan Khan defeated them (1128). As a result the Khitay appear to have turned north (1130), only to be forced westward by the Kırğız. Having established the city Imil east of Lake Balkash, Yeh-lü Tah-shi was joined by other groups [Kafesoğlu, 1956:51-2].

According to Barthold, these were 16,000 tents of Khitay that had left their homelands in Manchuria [IA Vol. 6:273-6 & 257]. Kafesoğlu, on the other hand, asserted that

according to Ibn al-Asir they were Turkic people who included 16,000 tents discontented with Karakhanid rule. He argued that as Great Sultan Sancar was in Transoxania at the time due to the problems Nasr Khan was having with the Karluk (1130-1), most likely these groups consisted of the Karluk and the Kanglı. In this context he also pointed out that the Karakhanid ruler of Balasagun, who subsequently asked help of Yeh-lü Tah-shi, did so in order to deal with the unruly Kanglı west of Issyk-Köl. Sümer thought there was little doubt the Kara-Khitay had displaced the Kanglı who pushed the Oguz and Karluk into Transoxania ahead of them. Accordingly, some of the Oguz Avşar, Salur and Yıva lineages continued into Iraq al-Ajam, namely Khuzistan and Shehrizor. While those Oguz who remained in Transoxania were able to establish good relations with the Karakhanids and were allowed to nomadize the pastures north and northeast of Bokhara, the Karluk rebelled against Nasr Khan (see above, 6.7). Turan agreed that the Oguz were in Transoxania at the time [Kafesoğlu, 1956:52-3; Sümer, 1965:100; Turan, 1965:189].

In sum, having affiliated the Kanglı and Karluk and hence become known as Kür Khan, or the *Khan of Khans*, Yeh-lü Tah-shi established the Kara-Khitay Empire (1124-1211) by occupying Balasagun and soon afterwards taking Khoten on the southern edge of the Tarim Basin, not to mention Kashgar (1137) [Kafesoğlu, 1956:53].

Not surprisingly, when the Karluks rebelled against Mahmud Khan in Samarkand they appear to have sought the Kara-Khitay's help. When Mahmud Khan was defeated he asked Great Sultan Sancar for help. After receiving Atsız's proclamation of allegiance (May 25, 1141), the sultan advanced on Transoxania with an army consisting of forces from Sistan, Gur, Ghazna and Mazandaran (July 1141). Once in Samarkand he appears to have sent his commanders against the Karluks who are said to have tried and failed

to appease him with a gift of 15,000 camels, 5,000 horses and 50,000 sheep. Whether or not this was the case, Kür Khan sent the sultan a letter asking for their pardon. Despite his vizier, Nizam al-Mulk's grandson Nasr al-Din Tahir's counsel to the contrary, in his reply Great Sultan Sancar threatened that unless Kür Khan accepted Islam he would march against him. At the battle that took place in Katvan, near Samarkand, the Kara-Khitay are thought to have applied cavalry tactics that were not yet known in Central Asia. As a result the Seljuks were surrounded and driven against the Dergam River where many drowned (September 9, 1141). Great Sultan Sancar is said to have broken through and fled to Tirmiz when the malik for Sistan, al-Fazl Nasr stood under the royal canopy (*çetr*) in his stead. The Seljuks are said to have lost more than 30,000 men, including as many as 4,000 commanders and officials. The Kara-Khitay, who are thought to have numbered at most 25,000 men – Karluk, Khitay and Chinese (the Khitay from Manchuria?) – also appear to have suffered heavy losses. Kür Khan seems to have remained at the battlefield for some three months [Köymen, 1984:321-3 & 328-32; Turan, 1965:190-1; Barthold, IA Vol. 6:274].

While in Tirmiz, Great Sultan Sancar returned Mazandaran to the Seljuks of Iraq and asked Sultan Mas'ud to await his orders in Rayy. He also asked for soldiery from Sistan, whose malik al-Fazl Nasr had been captured along with the sultan's daughter Türkan Khatun (Arslan Khan's widow) and his commander of the right wing, Kamac, and the latter's son. Although al-Fazl Nasr was released for his chivalrous behaviour on the field, Türkan Khatun and Kamac had to pay 500,000 and 100,000 dinars ransom respectively, apparently remaining in captivity for nearly a year. With Great Sultan Sancar thus occupied, Atsız occupied Serakhs in Khurasan (October 1141). From there he advanced on the capital Mary, which he entered after some resistance (October 21, 1141). Having

killed those religious leaders who had incited the inhabitants to resist, he took Great Sultan Sancar's treasury and many jurists and poets with him to Khwarazm. The main reason for his return, however, appears to have been the Kara-Khitay who had begun to raid the region. This suggests that Turan was wrong to assume Atsız was provoking the Kara-Khitay against the Seljuks. Once he had agreed to pay an annual tribute of 30,000 dinars Atsız returned to Khurasan and marched on Nishapur where he threatened to pillage the city unless the khutba was changed to include his name instead of Great Sultan Sancar's. Although this seems to have been accepted despite objections from the populace (May 29, 1142), possibly on Great Sultan Sancar's return from Tirmiz the khutba once again reverted to his name (July 1142). During this time Atsız's brother Yınal-Tekin is said to have pillaged much of Khurasan [*Ibid.* 336-42; Kafesoğlu, 1956:54-6; Turan, 1965:192].

Once the Kara-Khitay had established their administration in Transoxania and withdrawn, Great Sultan Sancar moved on Khwarazm where he besieged Atsız in the capital Gurganj (July 1143). The Seljuks entered the city but were repulsed. Nevertheless, Atsız sent an envoy bearing gifts and begged pardon. This seems to have been granted on condition that he returned all he had plundered while in Khurasan and proclaimed allegiance. Although Atsız is said to have complied with these conditions, he seems to have continued to resist Seljuk authority. When the sultan's envoy to Atsız learnt that two Isma'ilis had been sent to assassinate Great Sultan Sancar and these were found and killed in Marv, which caused Atsız to drown the envoy in the Amu-Darya, the sultan advanced into Khwarazm (October 1147). Once again Atsız withdrew to the fortress of Hezaresb and flooded its environs, but this time he did not come out and give battle. After a two-month siege the sultan took Hezaresb by force and Atsız fled to

Gurganj where he begged pardon. Great Sultan Sancar demanded that he proclaim allegiance in public, by the banks of the Amu-Darya River. Contrary to Turan, Atsız appears to have refused to kiss the ground as required, but the sultan accepted his proclamation (June 2, 1148) [*Ibid.* 345-53; Kafesoğlu, 1956:58-9; Turan, 1965:192].

### **6.9 Sultan Mas'ud**

After Davud and al-Rashid journeyed to Fars with Boz-Aba who although victorious against Sultan Mas'ud is thought to have wanted to secure the deceased Mengü-Pars' iqta', the sultan seems to have quickly re-established himself. Having proclaimed his allegiance, Selçuk-Shah was assigned Ahlat with his atabeg Oğuzoğlu. Nevertheless, Sümer [IA Vol. 8:139] and Köymen [1984:392] were of the opinion that during this period Zengi continued to undermine the sultan's position not only by provoking the commanders against him but also due to his growing renown.

Zengi had crossed the Euphrates into Syria (May 1137) and besieged Hims when he learnt that the Byzantine Emperor Ioannes Comnenus II likewise had entered Syria. In response Zengi lifted the siege and instead besieged the Crusader citadel of Ba'rin (Montferrandus), which controlled the route between Aleppo and Hims. The ruler of Tripoli, Count Raymond, asked King Fulk in Jerusalem for help, but Zengi surprised them. King Fulk managed to flee to Ba'rin but Raymond was captured. Although Joscelin II set out from Urfa with the intention of relieving Ba'rin, the Crusaders capitulated before he could arrive. During the siege of Ba'rin Ioannes Comnenus II took Antakya. The emperor is said to have sent Zengi an envoy, but he came to an agreement with the Crusaders that in the following year Aleppo, Sheyzer, Hama and

Hims would be attacked jointly and if taken left to Raymond. Before the onset of winter Zengi also took Ma'arrat al-Nu'man and Kafr Tab from the Crusaders [Alptekin, IA Vol. 13:529-30].

In the spring a joint Byzantine and Crusader force besieged and took Büza'a northeast of Aleppo (April 9, 1138). This seems to have caught Zengi by surprise. He sent one of his commanders, Ali Küçük, to Aleppo to strengthen the city defenses and asked help from Sultan Mas'ud who was wintering in Baghdad. Seeing that Aleppo was well prepared, Ioannes Comnenus II struck camp after three days (April 20, 1138) and having taken al-Asarib (April 21, 1138) besieged Sheyzer. Although his forces breached the outer walls, the inner citadel resisted for twenty days, after which the emperor raised the siege in return for a fee. Despite attempts to draw him into battle, Zengi appears to have successfully eluded the emperor who withdrew to Antakya. Having thus thwarted the joint campaign by the Byzantines and the Crusaders, Zengi re-entered Syria, where he gained Hims in exchange for Baalbek by marrying Zümürrüd Khatun, the mother of the ruler of Damascus, Mahmud, who in turn married Zengi's daughter. Zengi then attacked and captured Araka from the Crusaders, as well as retaking Büza'a (September 16, 1138), al-Asarib and Kafr Tab (October 7, 1138) [*Ibid.* 530].

For his part Sultan Mas'ud seems to have done little other than promise Zengi help, that is, until Zengi's envoy the jurist Kamal al-Din succeeded in provoking the populace. Kamal al-Din is said to have given money for people to rise and demand action during Friday prayers in both the caliph's and the sultan's mosques. Joined by soldiery, apparently the populace continued their demonstrations in front of Sultan Mas'ud's palace. Although as a result it seems that the sultan gave orders for an army to be prepared, when the Byzantine emperor lifted the siege of Aleppo, Zengi is said to have

instructed his envoy to stop Sultan Mas'ud as he would take the opportunity to occupy his lands. It seems Kamal al-Din was successful in this, too, as the sultan's army is said to have decamped and returned home [Köymen, 1984:390-1]. Possibly Sultan Mas'ud did not trust the commanders in his army to subordinate Zengi. Certainly during the following year he appears to have lost what little authority he may have had over them.

After al-Rashid's assassination Sultan Mas'ud had dismissed his vizier who was subsequently killed on his orders. Appointed on Great Sultan Sancar's instigation, al-Berekat is said to have formulated Seljukid policy against al-Rashid. Nevertheless, Sultan Mas'ud's new vizier, al-Hazin, had been responsible for Great Sultan Sancar's Treasury before serving as governor in Rayy. The vizier appears to have been highly successful in reforming the administration and increasing tax revenue during his short tenure. As a result the commanders united behind Karasungur, Davud's atabeg in Azarbayjan, who sent an ultimatum to Sultan Mas'ud, which threatened that unless they were sent the vizier's head they would serve another sultan. Karasungur is said to have brought a large army with Davud to the outskirts of Hamadan in order to make his point. When Sultan Mas'ud capitulated, Karasungur imposed his own vizier 'Izz al-Mulk in al-Hazin's stead (June 1139). Although Karasungur next journeyed to Fars and dispossessed Boz-Aba, assigning it to Selçuk-Shah whom he instated as malik, Boz-Aba appears to have returned and imprisoned the prince in a fortress where he subsequently died or was killed [*Ibid.* 383-4; Sümer, IA Vol. 8:138-9].

Even though Karasungur died soon afterwards (1040/1), Sultan Mas'ud does not seem to have regained a significant measure of authority over his commanders who are thought to have become the sole arbitrators as concerns the distribution of iqta's. When on being defeated at Katvan Great Sultan Sancar returned Rayy to Sultan Mas'ud and



asked him to journey there with his forces to await further orders, 'Izz al-Mulk appears to have objected that Sawa would be a better choice. However, the commanders are said to have sided with Great Sultan Sancar's envoy Abbas, who was the governor of Rayy, so that Sultan Mas'ud finally did as he had been asked. According to Köymen, since he is not mentioned in this context the sultan appears to have had little say in whether orders should be awaited in Sawa or Rayy [*Ibid.* 385-8; Sümer, IA Vol. 8:139].

While Sultan Mas'ud was dealing with Karasungur's ultimatum, the ruler of Damascus, Mahmud, was killed by one of his men (June 23, 1139), the isfahsalar Üner, who succeeded in instating Mahmud's brother Muhammad (1139/40). As a result Mahmud's other brother Bahram-Shah seems to have sought refuge with Zengi. Having been invited by Zümürrüd Khatun to attack Damascus, Zengi first took Baalbek (October 20, 1139). Next, he cut off all routes to Damascus (December 6, 1139), but on learning that the inhabitants were prepared to resist he lifted the blockade. When Muhammad died soon afterwards (March 29, 1140), however, and his son Abak was instated, Zengi marched on Damascus. This seems to have prompted the deceased Muhammad's vizier Üner to make a pact with King Fulk in Jerusalem. Accordingly, Abak would pay the king 20,000 dinars tribute each month as well as jointly attacking Zengi's citadel Banyas, which if taken would remain with the Crusaders. As a result Zengi withdrew to Havran where he seems to have waited for a month in case of a Crusader advance against him. When this did not materialize Zengi returned to Guta, near Damascus. While Zengi was in Guta, his commander in Banyas, Ibrahim Turgut, attacked a Crusader force en route to Jerusalem, but lost his life. This time Zengi seems to have withdrawn to Hama while a combined force from Damascus and Jerusalem besieged Banyas, which surrendered. Undeterred by the Crusaders' occupation of Banyas, Zengi is said to have assigned

Baalbek to a group of Yıva Türkmen from Arbil and Shehrizor, and in a surprise move besieged Damascus (June 22, 1140). Apparently Abak capitulated and accepted to have the khutba read in Zengi's name. On his way back to Mosul, Zengi also took the fortification of Bahmard by force from the commander Davud of Hisn Kayfa [Alptekin, IA Vol. 13:530-1; Sümer, 1965:117].

Apart from the commander for Mardin in south-eastern Anatolia proclaiming his allegiance to Zengi (1141), there appears to have been little if any activity in Iraq until Sultan Mas'ud gathered an army and announced that he intended to march on Zengi (1144). While the sultan was preparing his forces in Baghdad, Zengi is said to have offered 100,000 dinars but claimed he was too busy fighting the Crusaders to proclaim his allegiance to Sultan Mas'ud in person. Instead, he appears to have sent his eldest son Sayf al-Din Gazi as hostage. Possibly this is when the sultan ordered Zengi to take Urfa from the Crusaders. According to another rumour Sultan Mas'ud intended to assign Davud to take the fight to the Crusaders but Zengi had him killed in Tabriz by the Isma'ilis. Whatever the case, on learning that Joscelin II had left Urfa, Zengi sent an advance unit under the command of Yağ-Sıyan whom he joined with a force of Türkmen. Zengi breached the walls and took Urfa, assigning it to his Türkmen commander Ali Küçük (December 24, 1144). Two years afterwards, however, Zengi was killed by one of his servants while besieging the fortress of Jaber, which was in the hands of the Uqailids (September 14, 1146) [*Ibid.* 531-2; also Köymen, 1984:393 & Sümer, IA Vol. 8:139 & 1965:116].

The year following the fall of Urfa, the commanders Boz-Aba and Abbas in Fars and Rayy respectively seem to have set out from Isfahan with an undisclosed number of Seljukid princes on the pretext of proclaiming allegiance to Sultan Mas'ud in Hamadan

(1145). Realizing that they were going to depose him, the sultan appears to have withdrawn to Baghdad with the commanders Togan Yürekoğlu and Beg Arslan (Hasbey) when the commander Çavlı Candar failed to join them from Arran. Three months later Sultan Mas'ud met Çavlı in Azarbayjan and marched on the rebellious commanders who retired to their iqta's. The following year the sultan sent Togan Yürekoğlu to the Caucasus with Beg Arslan who killed him on his orders, whereupon the sultan also had Abbas killed (1146). It seems that Togan Yürekoğlu had joined the conspirators. Boz-Aba now instated Sultan Mahmud's son Muhammad in Isfahan and marched on Hamadan, but Beg Arslan returned in time from Ardabil, which he had taken from Ak-Arslan, and defeated Boz-Aba, having him killed (1147) [Sümer, IA Vol. 8:139].

After this Sultan Mas'ud is said to have handed over the running of his domains to Beg Arslan, the son of an Oguz beg who had migrated to Azarbayjan. Beg Arslan appears to have killed some of the commanders against him. As a result those afraid or jealous of his growing influence over Sultan Mas'ud rallied around his nephew Muhammad (1148). When the caliph refused to support them, the commanders besieged Baghdad. Apparently displeased with Sultan Mas'ud's dependence on Beg Arslan, Great Sultan Sancar once again journeyed to Rayy where Sultan Mas'ud seems to have persuaded him of Beg Arslan's virtues (although Köymen disagreed with this interpretation [1984:395]). During his meeting with Great Sultan Sancar, several of the commanders are said to have journeyed from Baghdad to Rayy to proclaim their allegiance. The others appear to have proclaimed allegiance upon the sultan's arrival in Baghdad (April 1150). Having toured his domains, Sultan Mas'ud died at the height of his power from typhoid while in Hamadan (October 2, 1152) [*Ibid.* 140].

### *6.10 The Oguz Rebellion*

It is not known whether the Khwarazmshah Atsız's campaigns into Üst-Yurt and the Mankishlag peninsula were against the Kıpçak or the Oguz or both. The Kıpçak are mentioned in the context of campaigns launched from Jand, east of Lake Aral, but these campaigns are after Katvan, as is the reference to the Oguz destroying the walls of Bokhara. This suggests the Oguz migrated south toward the Syr-Darya River after the said battle [Kafesoğlu, 1956:47, 60, 61 & 67]. Sümer was of the opinion that there was an independent Türkmen polity centred around the city of Mankishlag, which was subjugated by the Khwarazmshah Atsız after a long bloody war, giving cause for Great Sultan Sancar to accuse him of spilling Muslim blood. Accordingly, in the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the main body of the Oguz who were organized as the Boz-Ok and Üç-Ok shared pasturage and water with the Karluk to the north and east of Bokhara. Possibly due to the growing number of the Karluk they were forced south into Tocharistan just prior to Katvan [1965:100-4]. There is also the report that a certain Zengi who wanted to co-opt them against Great Sultan Sancar's commander Kamac, the governor of Balkh, invited the Oguz. This appears to have failed when instead they sided with Kamac who promised them pasturage in the environs of Balkh. Even if so, the Oguz seem to have also deserted Kamac in a battle against the Gurid Ala al-Din Hussein, which enabled the latter to occupy Balkh [Köymen, 1984:406]. Whatever the case, having arrived in Tocharistan the Oguz became affiliated to Great Sultan Sancar during his ensuing campaign against the Gurids.

After Katvan the Gurids appear to have taken Herat on the invitation of its inhabitants and successfully resisted Great Sultan Sancar's commander Kamac's efforts to retake it, possibly with help from the Oguz. As this endangered neighboring Sistan, its malik al-

Fazl Nasr is known to have offered military assistance, but the Gurids seem to have accepted to pay an annual tribute. Since this is thought to have taken place during the offensives in Khwarazm, it may explain why matters appear to have been left there (March 1147) [*Ibid.* 353-60].

Subsequently, however, Muhammad, a member of the Gurid ruling dynasty, appears to have fallen out with his half-brothers Mas'ud and Suri who was the senior by blood. As a result Muhammad is said to have sought refuge in Ghazna with Sultan Bahram-Shah who poisoned him because he was persuaded that Muhammad was trying to overthrow him. On learning of his brother's death, Sayf al-Din Suri marched on Ghazna and Sultan Bahram-Shah withdrew to Lahore. Possibly lulled into a false sense of security by the support he received from the Ghaznavid administration, Suri is said to have allowed most of his soldiery to return home. Consequently, when Sultan Bahram-Shah advanced from Lahore at the head of his army (March 13, 1149), he was forced to try and supplement his remaining forces with Oguz tribesmen and local militia. After some skirmishes between their advance units near Kabul (May 11, 1149), Sultan Bahram-Shah defeated Suri (May 12, 1149). Suri fled but was caught and hanged in Ghazna (May 19, 1149) [*Ibid.* 360-7].

When Suri's brother Sam died of his 'grief' en route to Ghazna, the task of avenging the deaths of his brothers fell on Ala al-Din Hussein. This time Sultan Bahram-Shah withdrew into Sistan, but Hussein pursued and defeated him twice in succession. Once again the sultan fled to Lahore. Hussein took Ghazna by force and allowed his soldiery to burn and pillage the city for 'seven days and nights'. He is said to have also dug up the bones of Sultan Bahram-Shah's ancestors and burnt them while exhuming his brothers' remains for proper burial in Gur. These actions seem to have earned him the

distinction Jihansuz (burner of the world). Be that as it may, Suri had Great Sultan Sancar's name omitted from the khutba. Now Hussein refused to send the annual tribute. After his visit to Rayy (1150), Great Sultan Sancar moved against the Gurids with support from al-Fazl Nasr in Sistan. Some of the Oguz appear to have defected during the battle that ensued (June 24, 1152?). Hussein was captured and sent to Marv [*Ibid.* 368-82 & 396].

It appears that as Great Sultan Sancar's affiliates the Oguz were expected to supply 24,000 sheep each year for use in the palace kitchens in Marv, which Sümer thought possibly showed they did not consist of 40,000 tents as other Turkish scholars appear to have accepted [1965:104]. The Oguz killed the tax collector because they claimed he insulted them when they refused to bribe him. Although the chamberlain responsible for the sultan's kitchens seems to have met the shortfall from his personal income, Kamac, the governor of Balkh, is said to have brought the issue to Great Sultan Sancar's attention and persuaded him to appoint him shihna to the Oguz as well. According to Köymen, who based his conclusion on records concerning the Türkmen in the Caspian Lowlands, a shihna was responsible for the establishment of migration routes, the protection of peasants and townsfolk along these, and the timely collection of tribal taxes. When the Oguz refused to recognise him, Kamac marched on them but he and his son lost their lives in the battle that followed [1984:400-1 & 406-9].

Although the Oguz appear to have offered Great Sultan Sancar 100,000 dinars for having killed Kamac and his son, as well as 1,000 Turkic slaves, his commanders entreated him not to let the Oguz insubordination go unpunished. As a result the sultan marched on Balkh where the Oguz are said to have begged pardon with their women and children, increasing their offer. Apparently Kamac's grandson, now the commander

for Balkh, and others prevented Great Sultan Sancar from accepting this improved offer. According to Köymen, when the Seljuk forces attacked the main Oguz encampment, they were annihilated and Great Sultan Sancar was taken prisoner (March-April 1153) [1984:409-12]. According to Sümer, however, Sancar fled toward Balkh. He was pursued and suffered another defeat after which he fled to Marv. On learning that the Oguz were approaching Marv he is said to have withdrawn. The Oguz are known to have sacked the city (July 1153). Accordingly, soon afterwards they captured Great Sultan Sancar and brought him back [1965:105]. What seems certain is that they declared Sancar their sultan and seated him on his throne. Nevertheless, when Sancar refused the chieftain Bahtiyar's demand that he be assigned part of Marv, they sacked the city again. On their return to Balkh, while continuing to guard him during the day, the Oguz appear to have caged Sancar at night. But once they started to pillage Khurasan in earnest, Sancar appears to have been permanently caged and on occasion totally ignored so that he may have come near to starving [Köymen, 1984:414-7; Turan, 1965:195].

Presumably because the remainder of the Seljuks' forces in Khurasan were dispersed on their iqta's, many of which had reverted to the Treasury after Katvan [Turan, 1965:191-2], at first the Oguz do not seem to have encountered any serious resistance. Those commanders who could appear to have gathered in Tabaristan, immediately south of the Caspian Sea, where possibly on the imprisoned sultan's vizier Fakhr al-Mulk's instigation they agreed to support Sultan Tapar's remaining son Süleyman-Shah who had been released on Sultan Mas'ud's death. Süleyman-Shah seems to have been declared sultan in Nishapur (September 4, 1153), while attempting to engage the Oguz who were busy sacking Marv for the second time (August-September 1153). Presumably

unsuccessful, Süleyman-Shah eventually fled to Iraq (April-May 1154). During the following year the Oguz sacked Khurasan, entering Mashhad and Tus (November 1154), then Nishapur (December 1154), where they may have appointed their one and only governor [Köymen, 1984:419, 428-30, 434-5 & 449; Kafesoğlu, 1956:62-3; Sümer, 1965:105; Houtsma, IA Vol. 8:480-1]. Köymen came to the conclusion that at least a quarter of the urban population of Khurasan died at the hands of the Oguz in the eighteen months afterwards their victory near Balkh [*Ibid.* 438-45].

Meanwhile the Khwarazmshah Atsız had advanced to Amül (Amüye), which was on the route from Hezaresb to Marv. Instead of taking the citadel by force he invited the commander to proclaim allegiance and when he refused Atsız applied to Sancar who is said to have replied that he could have this and more if he dispatched his son Il-Arslan to free him. Atsız retired to Khwarazm but is thought to have sent his brother Yinal-Tigin who besieged Beyhak and raided its environs with such ferocity that the region suffered from famine for two years after his departure (from December 1153 to May or September 1154). Nevertheless, Atsız returned to try and form a coalition against the Oguz (1154). To this end he is thought to have approached the Saffarid al-Fazl in Sistan, the Gurid Ala al-Din Jihansuz and the Bavendid Shah Gazi in Tabaristan. While he was thus occupied the Seljuk commanders declared Sancar's nephew the Karakhanid Mahmud Khan sultan but contrary to custom he does not seem to have announced his investiture to the heads of neighboring states. Certainly throughout this period in Baghdad the khutba continued to be read in Great Sultan Sancar's name. Although Mahmud Khan does not appear to have had any success against the Oguz, they are thought to have withdrawn to Marv and made peace (July 1155). For his part Mahmud Khan seems to have approached Atsız who apparently responded by arriving in



Khurasan with his son Il-Arslan (May 1156). Here he learnt that Kamac's grandson Muayyad Ay-Aba had freed Sancar who was in Tirmiz (April 1156), his wife Tūrkan Khatun having died in captivity. When Great Sultan Sancar notified the heads of the neighboring states of his release, Atsız proclaimed his allegiance, dying of a stroke soon afterwards (July 30, 1156). Before Great Sultan Sancar could re-establish his dominion he also died and the Great Seljuk Empire came to an end (April 22 or 29, 1157). Great Sultan Sancar had no sons and Khurasan became divided between Mahmud Khan who though married to Sancar's daughter at one point tried to join the Oguz, Kamac's grandson Muayyad Aba and the Khwarazmshah Atsız's son Il-Arslan (r.1156-72) [*Ibid.* 422-6, 449-51 & 454-75; Kafesoğlu, 1956:65-72].

Elsewhere Ala al-Din Jihansuz, who had been allowed to return to Firuzkuh in Gur on proclaiming his allegiance to Great Sultan Sancar, marched on Ghazna. When Sultan Bahram-Shah withdrew, he instated his remaining brother. Sultan Bahram-Shah returned and having taken Ghazna by force hanged Sayf al-Din. On Sultan Bahram-Shah's death his son Khusraw-Shah succeeded to the throne. When he was in Lahore, Jihansuz took Ghazna by force and declared himself sultan (1155). Jihansuz died soon after Great Sultan Sancar's release from captivity (1156) [*Ibid.* 424-5 & 465; Kafesoğlu, 1956:63].

### ***6.11 The Seljuks of Iraq***

Sultan Mas'ud had declared his nephew Muhammad heir apparent and married him to one of his daughters. On Sultan Mas'ud's death, his commanders ignored Muhammad who is thought to have been outside Hamadan at the time and instated the sultan's son

Malik-Shah. Apparently they regretted their choice and three months later Beg Arslan instated Muhammad in his stead. Sultan Muhammad appears to have had Beg Arslan beheaded in order to win over the commanders in Azarbayjan and Arran, but these turned against him and gathered around Süleyman-Shah who had fled the Oguz (see above, 6.10). Süleyman-Shah seems to have been an irredeemable alcoholic and Sultan Muhammad returned from Isfahan where he had escaped [Houtsma, IA Vol. 8:480-1].

Meanwhile Caliph al-Muqtafi had taken Hilla and Wasit (1154). When Süleyman-Shah came to Lihf and established contact with him, the caliph agreed to have his name included in the khutba on condition that he did not interfere in the affairs of Iraq al-Arab (February-March 1156). Having defeated and imprisoned Süleyman-Shah (June-July 1156), Sultan Muhammad besieged Baghdad (February 1157). When Il-Deniz occupied Hamadan with Malik-Shah and his charge Arslan-Shah (Tuğrul's son), the sultan lifted the siege. Possibly because he could not gain the support of Sultan Muhammad's commanders, Il-Deniz withdrew and the sultan re-occupied the capital. In the meantime the Seljuk palace in Baghdad was pillaged and burnt. Presumably since he was caught between the two, namely Il-Deniz in Azarbayjan and the caliph in Iraq al-Arab, Sultan Muhammad does not appear to have attempted to campaign against either until his death (1159) [*Ibid.* 481; Turan, 1965:199-200; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:377-8; Zetterstéen, IA Vol. 8:576].

After this the Seljuks of Iraq came under the authority of the atabeg Il-Deniz who kept Sultan Arslan-Shah (r.1160-77) a virtual prisoner in Hamadan with his sons Jihan-Pahlavan (the sultan's stepbrother) and Kızıl-Arslan. Malik-Shah was poisoned and Süleyman-Shah put to death (1161), but those commanders ill disposed toward the atabeg, namely Inanç Beg, Satmaz and Argu, the governors of Rayy, Isfahan and Kazvin

respectively, approached the sultan's brother Muhammad's atabeg Sungur in Fars. Il-Deniz defeated them outside Hamadan and Muhammad was forced to flee to Khuzistan (1161). Although with the encouragement of the new caliph these commanders and others tried to instate Malik-Shah's son Mahmud, they were also defeated (1162). Finally all the commanders in Azarbayjan, Arran and Iraq al-Ajam appear to have journeyed to Isfahan to proclaim their allegiance to Sultan Arslan-Shah (1165), who remained in his stepfather's shadow. On Il-Deniz's death (1175), Sultan Arslan-Shah is said to have tried to campaign against Jihan-Pahlavan who had declared himself atabeg in Azarbayjan, but having fallen ill he was forced to capitulate and died soon afterwards (1177). Although his eight-year old son Tuğrul became sultan, Tuğrul remained in Jihan-Pahlavan's shadow until the latter's death (1185). When Tuğrul tried to assert his sovereignty over Jihan-Pahlavan's brother Kızıl-Arslan with the help of the Türkmen affiliated to Kıpçak's grandson Hasan, whose sister he appears to have married, Caliph al-Nasir (r.1179-1225) became involved against him. Eventually Tuğrul lost his life in a battle near Rayy against the Khwarazmshah Tekiș (r.1173-1200) and the Seljuks of Iraq also passed into history (March 25, 1194) [Yınanç, IA Vol. 1:610ff; Sümer, 1965:113; Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:377-8 & 1956:73-80; Köymen, IA Vol. 12/2:19ff].

### ***6.12 Summary***

Kafesoğlu overlooked Sultan Tapar in preference for Great Sultan Sancar as a ruler in keeping with the stature of those prior to the interregnum. In his opinion this was warranted by the indisputable predominance of Great Sultan Sancar's name in the khutba from Erzurum to Samarkand and Ghazna [IA Vol. 10:373 & 376-7]. As for

sultans Mahmud, Tuğrul and Mas'ud in Iraq, Kafesoğlu thought that they lacked the necessary personal qualities to come to grips with the resurgent Georgians in the Caucasus or the caliphs in Baghdad. In his opinion, the latter fuelled the ambitions of the commanders by taking sides in the conflicts between Sultan 'Apar's descendants. As a result, the domains of the Seljuks of Iraq finally became divided between the atabegs of Mosul, Azarbayjan and Fars, namely the Zengids (1127-1233), the Il-Deniz or Elgüzids (1146-1225) and the Salgurids (1194-1286), not to mention the Abbasid Caliphate in Iraq al-Arab [*Ibid.* 375-6 & 378]. With reference to the Crusaders, Kafesoğlu can be said to have argued that the Seljuks' failure to oust them was due to dissent among the commanders sent to deal with them, primarily because they were more concerned with securing fiefdoms [*Ibid.* 373ff].

Turan thought that the dissolution of the Great Seljuk Empire after the death of Great Sultan Sancar was due to internal weaknesses, which he summarized as 'Turkic feudalism' [1965:176 & 234-41]. He argued that while common ownership prevented the Seljuks from establishing absolute rule such as under the Sasanids or the Byzantines, it made fratricidal conflict inevitable on the death of a sovereign, at least until the strongest was able to marshal the resources of state. In his opinion, the Seljuks' iqta' system mitigated the tendency for Turkic polities to fracture along dynastic lines in the absence of a strong member. This was because rather than being the muqta', commanders and their soldiery became dependent on the local populace for their welfare. Quite apart from the number of fighting men that could be supported by a large iqta', according to Turan, governorship meant that along with lesser iqta' holders commanders acquired financial and non-Shari judiciary responsibilities. Some governors were favoured also with the responsibility of bringing up members of the dynasty, on

the understanding that when these came of age they would continue to serve as their commanders-in-chief, viziers or regents. As for the Crusaders and the Abbasid Caliphate, Turan limited his comments to the events he included for this period concerning the Great Seljuks [*Ibid.* 179, 182-3 & 197]. As such he pointed to the dissension among the Seljuk commanders and the caliphs' resurgent political ambitions, which he associated with the weakness of the Seljuks of Iraq.

Köymen was of the opinion that the complex of tributary relationships under Great Sultan Sancar doubtless had its origins on the steppe. That said, after the defeat at Katvan, in his opinion the Great Seljuk Empire began to fracture along tributary rather than dynastic lines. Although he was not specific in his criticism, he argued that the primary sources concerning this period were sufficient to avoid the application of a framework that was as imaginary as it was false [1984:XVI-XIX]. As concerns the Abbasid Caliphate, according to Köymen, the struggle that developed between the caliphs and the Seljuks arose from the weakness of the Seljuks of Iraq, who tried to legitimize their attempts to gain freedom from Great Sultan Sancar. He argued that this enabled the caliphs to try and re-establish the Caliphate as a political entity, which they succeeded in doing after Great Sultan Sancar's death [1963:194-204].

Köymen saw the Crusades as a phase in the struggle between the East and the West, though he did not specify its nature. In his opinion, although the initial motivation for the Crusades may have been religious, from the point of view of Turkish history, they were a response to the Seljuks' conquest of Anatolia. He pointed out that at first local rulers and governors in Syria and Iraq seem to have almost completely ignored the Crusaders. Even when they realized the seriousness of their intent, however, unlike in Anatolia, where Kılıç Arslan and Danişmend Gazi allied, the Seljuks in Syria and

Mesopotamia failed to form a united front, which allowed for the rapid establishment of the Crusader principalities in Urfa, Antakya and Jerusalem [1963:287ff].

Özaydın thought that it was Sultan Tapar who restored the Great Seljuk Empire to its former glory [1991:151-3]. As for the Crusaders, he agreed with Köymen that they were a stage in the struggle between the East and the West, and that they benefited from local jealousies that came to the fore during the interregnum. In doing so he pointed out that when local commanders such as Çökürmüş and Artukoğlu Sökmen were willing to put aside their differences they were able to defeat the Crusaders as at Harran (May 7, 1104), where they captured Baudouin de Bourg and Joscelin de Courtney [*Ibid.* 89-90].

For his part Sümer concerned himself solely with Great Sultan Sancar's treatment of the Oguz who he pointed out were after all his own people. In his opinion Great Sultan Sancar's behaviour toward them differed little from that of the Iranians around him. He argued that even the Ghaznavid Sultan Mas'ud had not been so harsh with the Türkmen of Iraq [1965:106].

In sum, although Turkish historians concurred that the weakness of the Seljuks of Iraq enabled the Abbasid Caliphate to become re-established on Great Sultan Sancar's death, they did not agree on the underlying reasons. By comparison, they agreed that dissent among the Seljuks enabled the Crusaders success.

## 7. EVALUATION

As stated at the outset, the aim of this thesis is not only to present for the first time in English the corpus of Turkish scholarly writing on the Great Seljuks, but also to evaluate the individual conclusions. Although Turkish scholars see the Great Seljuk Empire as the beginning of Turko-Islamic civilization, they remain disagreed on what the Seljuks' ideology and cultural expectations were.

While Köymen agreed with Köprülü that martial aristocracies administered Turkic polities, he abstained from discussing the Turkic ideal of world dominion, which Köprülü thought Turkic rulers shared with other cultures, such as the Abbasids and Byzantines. Turan and Kafesoğlu, on the other hand, used the concept of world dominion to explain that Turkic aristocracies were of a hereditary nature, which they thought underpinned their propensity for founding empires. None of the Turkish scholars on the Seljuks accepted that Turkic sovereigns were elected. However, they agreed that common ownership of the realm by dynastic members made succession indeterminate. Kafesoğlu thought that the pursuit of divine favour on the battlefield compounded the problem. Turan argued that the principle of common ownership prevented the Great Seljuk Empire from becoming an autocracy in the Iranian or Greek tradition. Last but not least, Kafesoğlu related the religious tolerance of Turkic cultures to the *töre*, their secular customary law.

Kafesoğlu went on to write *Türk Milli Kültürü* (*The Turks' National Culture*), a review of the historical roots of 'Turkic culture, but he did not draw any new conclusions as concerns the Seljuks. Turan's approach, which was propounded in *Türk Cihân Hâkimiyeti Mefkûresi Tarihi* (*History of the Turks' Concept of World Dominion*) and *Selçuklular ve İslâmiyet* (*The Seljuks and Islâm*), likewise added little to views expressed in *Selçuklular Tarihi ve Türk-İslâm Medeniyeti* (*Seljuk History and Turko-Islamic Civilization*). More recently Sencer Divitçioğlu has attempted an in-depth cultural analysis of the Kök Türk Empire (553-745) in accordance with modern anthropological theory, extending the methodology with doubtful success to aspects of Karakhanid, Seljuk and early Ottoman history [1987, 1992, 1994 & 1996]. One reason for this is that – when not purely anthropological or rendered almost incomprehensible by his insistence on inventing words – as an economist his concerns appear curbed by whether or not history provides proof of economic theories such as Marx's Asiatic Mode of Production. There are also Halil İnalcık's papers on the influences of Iranian and Turkic ideology in the Ottoman Empire [1993a, 1993b & 1994]. Although Divitçioğlu and İnalcık are more specific than either Kafesoğlu or Turan were, with the exception of Divitçioğlu's subsequent works, their conclusions likewise are based almost solely on the 8<sup>th</sup> century Orkhun stone inscriptions, Yusuf Has Hajib's *Kutadgu Bilig* (1069-70) and Mahmud of Kashgar's *Divanü Lügat-it-Türk* (1072-3).

Although the Orkhun stone inscriptions refer to a Turkic people called the Oguz near Lake Baykal, clearly these were forced into accepting Kök Türk ideology. According to recent archaeological excavations, some appear to have migrated from Inner Asia after the establishment of the Kök Türk Empire, reaching the region between Lakes Balkash and Issyk-Köl during the 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, their namesakes, situated



between the Caspian and Aral Seas in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, included Turkic people who had been affiliated to descent lines other than the Oguz from Lake Baykal. According to Barthold and Minorsky, the Oguz in the west may have been united by the Şul (from Çöl or desert), who were in Jurjan, south-east of the Caspian Sea, from at least as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Consequently, the Orkhun inscriptions may provide only the most general framework for Seljuk ideology and Türkmen cultural expectations.

Yusuf Has Hajib was from Balasagun, thought to have been near Lake Balkash [Bozkurt, 1992:100]. His opus, *Kutadgu Bilig*, which was finished in Kashgar, was dedicated to the Karakhanid Tabgaç Buğra Kara Khan (r.1056-1103). Kashgar was situated on the westernmost part of the Tarim Basin, where the trade routes from China to Central Asia converged, after branching off to the Indus Valley at Yarband. Not surprisingly, Yusuf Has Hajib's influences have been traced to the Iranian, Chinese and Indian literary traditions, not to mention the Islamic philosophers Farabi (870-950) and Ibn Sina (980-1037) [Dilâçar, 1988; Arat, IA Vol. 6:1038ff; İnalçık, 1993a; Divitçioğlu, 1992:130-207]. Although Kashgar is known to have come under Türgiş rule (632), this was short-lived. Initially on the Left Wing of the western half of the Kök Türk Empire, the Türgiş broke away soon afterwards and established an independent kaganate (658-766). At the time situated between Lakes Zaysan and Urungu, with a branch east of the Irtysh River, the Karluk became active in and around Kashgar from 670 [Sümer, 1965:18; Arat, IA Vol. 6:351-2]. When the Uyğur, who had ended the Kök Türk Empire, defeated them, the Karluk migrated to Transoxania, where they ended the Türgiş Kaganate. Consequently, *Kutadgu Bilig* seems more relevant for Karakhanid rather than the Seljuks' ideology and expectations.

As for the *Divanü Lügat-it-Türk*, although Mahmud of Kashgar appears to have been from a ruling lineage [Atalay 1992/I:xi-xiv], contrary to Dilâçar [1988:23], it is not certain that this lineage was related to the Karakhanids (840-1212) [Bozkurt, 1992:92]. More importantly, Mahmud seems to have travelled throughout the Tarim Basin and Central Asia, visiting Turkic people and their cities [Atalay, 1992/I-IV]. Consequently, the work is not only a reliable lexicon of the Turkic languages at the time of the Seljuks, but in contrast to the Orkhun stone inscriptions and *Kutadgu Bilig* it also provides invaluable insights into the cultural background of the Seljuks' Turkic affiliates. This is verified by Köymen's studies of everyday life throughout Central Asia with regard to Turkic housing, dress, food, culture and social life [1971a, 1971b, 1971c, 1971d & 1975a]. Interestingly enough, Mahmud is thought to have finished the *Divanü Lügat-it-Türk* in Baghdad (1072-3), because allegedly it was presented to the caliph [Atalay, 1992/I:xiv-xv], possibly al-Muqtadi.

As with the Orkhun stone inscriptions and *Kutadgu Bilig*, not to mention Oguz epics and folklore, such as the *Oguz-Nama* and *Dede Korkut*, or for that matter sedentary chronicles, the *Divanü Lügat-it-Türk* points to differentiation rather than nomadic pastoral homogeneity. This is not to deny that along with others on the Eurasian steppes, in general Turkic expectations can be said to have idealized pastoral mobility over sedentary wealth.<sup>24</sup> As late as the 15<sup>th</sup> century, for instance, Karayülük Osman, the head of the Akkoyunlu polity advised his sons that if they settled they would endanger their freedom and independence, namely their Turkishness [Woods, 1993:97]. Notwithstanding, although the rulers of the Khazar Kaganate and the Kök Türk

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<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of the contradictory pull of mobility and wealth among nomadic pastoral cultures see Lattimore [1967:76-80 & 519-26].

Empire were from the same imperial clan, namely the A-shih-na, the Khazar kagans were venerated. The Oguz yabgu, on the other hand, seems to have been chosen from among the heads of the descent lines that made up their polity. Nor must it be forgotten that during the 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> centuries many 'Turkic people from Inner Asia became sedentarized. Having started immediately north and south of the T'ien-shan Mountains' eastern ranges, the process is known to have spread westward to the Caspian Sea and from there into Khurasan [Ögel, 1962:333-40; Esin, 1980a:131-6; also Frye & Sayılı, 1992:Chapter XIII].

Rather than the above-mentioned sources, it is Ibn Fadlan's personal observations of the Oguz that shed a direct light on the Seljuks' and their Türkmen affiliates' ideology and background. Although Ibn Fadlan pre-dated the Seljuks by nearly a century (922), there can be no doubt that the Oguz called their leader yabgu [Şeşen, 1975:37], a title that Selçuk Beg's eldest son Arslan appears to have subsequently appropriated. Whether or not as legend would have it Selçuk Beg was the yabgu's Commander-in-Chief, it is clear that the Seljuks were from the very same Oguz situated between the Caspian and Aral Seas.

Ibn Fadlan remarked that the Oguz Commander-in-Chief at the time of his visit had been chosen because he was considered their best rider and archer [*Ibid.* 38]. In view of the numerous families he observed in his camp [*Ibid.* 37], it is clear that the Commander-in-Chief had to merit the office although of aristocratic descent. It is also clear that the Oguz did not interpret merit solely in martial terms. Ibn Fadlan mentions that a chieftain, namely Küçük Yınal, had become a Muslim but that he had to renounce because his affiliates had disapproved [*Ibid.* 35]. It seems, therefore, that Küçük Yınal

had to comply with Oguz custom in order to retain his position as chieftain, let alone hold higher office.

Although Ibn Fadlan thought the Oguz were heathens, relying on their judgements rather than religion, he related that like Muslims they believed there was one god, namely Tengri [*Ibid.* 30-1]. The underlying point being that the Oguz conducted themselves according to customary law, their töre [*Ibid.* 32-5]. In doing so, however, they do not appear to have adhered to hard and fast rules but benefited from a consultative process. Among the various examples Ibn Fadlan gave concerning Oguz customs, he noted that a plaintiff had say in the ruling passed by his chieftain [*Ibid.*]. Not surprisingly, Ibn Fadlan's first observations concerning the Oguz were that they determined everything in council. His personal experience verifies that an objection by their lowliest member could hold up a decision [*Ibid.* 30 & 39-40].

It is all the more remarkable, therefore, that in his notes on the text, Şeşen chooses to highlight instead 'old Turkish' customs, such as burial, and even presents the concept of sovereignty among Turkic people as if it were another such custom [*Ibid.* 111-42]. Arguably this is because Turkish scholars have not developed a paradigm that enables them to put nomadic pastoralism in a historical context. There can be little doubt that social groupings sustained by agriculture were more advanced than those reliant on pastoralism were. Hydraulic agriculture in particular provided gainful employment for urban specialists – administrative, military, and religious, not to mention craftsmen and merchants. As the Seljuks clearly demonstrated, however, social customs and political institutions particular to people on the Eurasian steppes, which tended to combine administrative, military and religious offices in that of chieftain, retained their viability in a mainly sedentary environment where pastoralism could be practiced.

In the ensuing sections, the history of the Great Seljuks according to Turkish scholars, which has been summarised in Chapters 3-6, will be analysed from the standpoint provided by Ibn Fadlan's observations of the Oguz, with further references to modern studies in anthropology.

### ***7.1 Nomadic Pastoral Organization***

Arguably the basis of any paradigm that attempts to put nomadic pastoral polities in a historical context has to accept that economic considerations determined their socio-political outlooks.

First and foremost, it seems that while the minimum number of animals a family required for survival changed according to the composition of its herd [Khazanov, 1994], the availability of seasonal pasturage and water determined the maximum number. Clearly, therefore, winter pasturage must have been critical to survival.

Secondly, although nomadic pastoralists were as dependent on land as agriculturists were, they had little use for it unless they were able to move on. This is why grazing rights and hence migration routes and schedules are deemed to have been usufruct not absolute. Consequently, contrary to Khazanov [*Ibid.*], associated levels of hierarchical organization among nomadic pastoralists must be seen as having been primarily political, not territorial. Whereas *kinship* defined one's blood genealogy, *descent* provided a political genealogy for *all* the affiliates (from various kinship groups).<sup>25</sup> It is this latter,

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<sup>25</sup> For instance, although of the same kin group, the Seljuks were those clans affiliated to Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg, the Yabgulu were affiliated to Arslan Yabgu, thus his son Kutalmış and hence Kutalmış's sons, while the Yıvalı were affiliates of Seljuk's youngest son Yusuf and hence his sons İbrahim, Er-Taş and Er-Basgan.

the camp leader's political standing, that determined his and hence his affiliates' grazing rights and migration schedules.

It does not follow, however, as Barfield argued [1989], that the more powerful the nomadic pastoral polity the better its members' chances of survival, even if regular access frequently depended on the strength of the polity with regard to its neighbours, whether sedentary or not.<sup>26</sup> On the contrary, it seems that nomadic pastoral communities found economic and hence political regulation potentially restrictive of their fortunes. This is because, as Barth [1986] and also Divitçioğlu [1987] have noted, livestock provided not only the means of production but also of consumption (meat, dairy products, felt, wool, etc.). However, the point requires some expansion because it is clear from Khazanov [1994] that the number of animals was as dependent on climatic and biological pulsation, namely severe winters, crippling spring frosts (*jute*), summer droughts, or disease, as it was on their reproductive capacity. Certainly, the latter was affected by the quality of grazing made available through political affiliation. If the ratio of animals to people were upset by any of the former, however, not to mention a disproportionate rise in population, then survival must have been threatened.

In short, if you ate your capital, then you could no longer produce and consume. Thus, whatever the minimum number and mix of animals required for survival, social fragmentation into camps and hence independent economic units clearly ensured that

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<sup>26</sup> An oft-cited story in this context concerns the founder of the Hsiung-nu Empire, Modun (209-174 BCE). When the Tung-hu requested first his finest horse, then his favourite consort, contrary to advice Modun complied because he wanted continued good relations. Encouraged, the Tung-hu next requested territory. When counselled to acquiesce because it was wasteland, Modun executed those advisors, saying: 'Land is the foundation of the state, so how can you give it away?'

not all members of a polity were affected by adverse conditions, whether climatic, biological, or for that matter human.

## ***7.2 Selçuk Beg's Lineage***

Kafesoğlu argued that given Selçuk Beg's father's renown was Temir Yalığ (Iron Bow) he must have been of a ruling lineage. Although Sümer agreed that the bow symbolized sovereignty, because according to the Kök Türk stone inscriptions the kagan in the East had sent three arrows to his counterpart in the West, he was careful not to draw the same conclusion. For his part Turan thought Selçuk Beg was of noble blood because offices held by the Oguz nobility were hereditary, as among the Khazar. Neither Kafesoğlu's nor Turan's view can be justified by what is known.

A good starting point is the Kök Türk Bilge Kagan's (716-34) Chief Counsellor and Commander-in-Chief, Tonyukuk – in fact this was his title, thus Bilge 'Tunyukuk Buyla Bağa 'Tarkan [Tekin, 1994:4 & 68], who was also Bilge Kagan's father-in-law [Divitçioğlu, 1987:169]. Tonyukuk was of the A-sheh-tê who gave their daughters in marriage to the imperial A-shih-na dynasty [*Ibid.*], which doubtless was a sacred clan. Thus the Khazar kagan, who was of the A-shih-na, left his palace only four times a year and could not be observed by his folk who had to prostrate themselves until he had passed. The Khazar's Chief Counsellor and Commander-in-Chief, the Hakan-beh, who was responsible for the day-to-day running of the kaganate, had to report barefoot each day. If he or any commander lost a battle and lived to tell the tale, his wife, children, houses, livestock and weapons were given away in his presence by the kagan who could finally also cleave him in two and have the cadaver crucified [*Ibid.* 126 & 130]. However,

it is not clear whether or not the K k T rk's so-called house-kagans can be understood to confirm that initially their kagans also were venerated [*Ibid.* 133]. Bilge Kagan asserted that like his father and uncle he had taken the field on many an occasion [Tekin, 1988:29 & 41ff]. That said, a K k T rk kagan was still ritually strangled during inauguration as among the Khazar and also the Uy ur [Divit io lu, 1987:136]. The Oguz tradition of strangling a rebellious member of the ruling dynasty with his bowstring until dead, so that his blood was not shed, arguably echoes a similar taboo.

Be that as it may, although a combined post of Commander-in-Chief and Chief Counsellor seems discernible also among the Karluk, at least as late as Ali Tekin and his regent/commander Alp Kara, it is clear that among the Oguz these offices were separate. The embassy Ibn Fadlan was part of first visited the yabgu and his regent and then the Oguz Commander-in-Chief, who appears to have been senior to the Chief Counsellor as every chieftain had one as his regent [ e en, 1975:37; Divit io lu, 1994:17]. One Chief Counsellor mentioned in the *Oguz-Nama* is thought to be none other than Korkut Ata [Togan, 1982:139-41], author of *Dede Korkut* [Boratav, IA Vol. 6:860-6].

In Rashid al-Din's version of the *Oguz-Nama*, the list of the yabgu's regents, from the Salur, Yazır, D  er, Bayındır, Yıva, and other Oguz lineages are referred to as vizier or regent, then as *anth k*, *inak*, or *atabek* [Togan, 1982:139-41]. *Anth k* seems to stem from *and* or oath [Atalay, 1992/I:42, 459], and hence possibly refers to a trustee or even a guardian. *Inak* also denotes a position of trust, as it seems to be a spelling of *Inal*, * nal* or *Yınal*, namely brother-in-law. As for *atabek* (the Seljukid *atabeg*), it is unlikely to have been devised by Sultan Alp-Arslan except perhaps in name. The sultan is known to have appointed his vizier Nizam al-Mulk as his son Malik-Shah's atabeg. Although K pr l 



thought the practice stemmed from the Turkic folk custom of entrusting the upbringing of a son to another family [IA Vol. 1:712ff], it is a form of reciprocity that continues to be common not only in tribal but also rural and urban communities. Accordingly, a family undertakes the upbringing of a poorer affiliate's son and even adopts him [see also Barth, 1986]. In short, the Oguz yabgu's Chief Counsellor (regent or vizier) appears to have been his brother-in-law, when not his trustee or guardian. This suggests that although noble, the title was not hereditary. Reports that the yabgu was chosen on merit or chance (one who merited divine favour?) from among *all* their nobles [Divitçioğlu, 1994:17-9], seem to confirm this. Consequently, the title of Commander-in-Chief could not have been hereditary either, although an office held by one of noble birth.

While this gives some credibility to Divitçioğlu's suggestion concerning the latter part of the Seljuks' legend of origin [*Ibid.* 58-9], it must be pointed out that his views remain as speculative as Kafesoğlu's. According to Divitçioğlu, in the last quarter of the 10<sup>th</sup> century the yabgu, who was of the Oguz Yazır's Baranlu clan, broke with custom and appointed his son, Ali, heir apparent. This paved the way for his grandson – none other than Shah-Malik – who came to reside in Jand and nearly annihilated the Seljuks (1034). Divitçioğlu's point being that Selçuk Beg rebelled against the introduction of a hereditary principle and, having lost, left.

Whatever the case, given that Selçuk Beg's office among the Oguz is not in dispute and there is no mention of the Kınık following him to Jand as a body, he was most probably of a noble if minor lineage, as Köymen implied.

### *7.3 The Seljuks' Political Aspirations*

Köymen [1979:43-78] and Kafesoğlu [IA Vol. 10:353-8] argued that right from the outset the Seljuks were intent on establishing their own polity. Selçuk Beg's possible usurpation of the taxes due to the Oguz yabgu from Jand and Arslan's eventual appropriation of the title of yabgu seem to support this argument, as possibly Sultan Mahmud's failure to entice the Seljuks into Ghaznavid service also does. Nevertheless, the Seljuks' political aspirations can not be linked, in accordance with Kafesoğlu and Turan, to Selçuk Beg's nobility and hence a quest for world dominion. Most likely the establishment of a largely sedentary empire by a nomadic pastoral clan was a result of the Seljuks long apprenticeship under the Samanids in Central Asia and to a lesser extent under the Ghaznavids in Khwarazm.

Upon their arrival in Jand, the Seljuks are said to have decided that in order to gain favour they had to adhere to local custom and become Muslims. To be sure, as Muslims the Seljuks would have been able to attract other Türkmén to their banner in resisting the yabgu's tax collector. Türkmén of the Oguz and Karluk are known to have resided in Süt-Kent, near Lake Karakul north of the Syr-Darya during the first quarter of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. There were also a thousand tents of Türkmén near Tashkent [Sümer, 1965:59]. There is no mention, however, if Selçuk Beg claimed the taxes due to the Oguz yabgu. What is known is that Shah-Malik who may have forced Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg out of Jand with their uncle shortly after Selçuk Beg's death is mentioned as the city's subsequent ruler. On the other hand, there is the report concerning Selçuk Beg's request from the nearest regional governor for a Muslim jurist to convert them [Köymen, 1979:21-3], which suggests that the Seljuks had taken Jand from the Oguz yabgu and allied with the Samanids. Moreover, Sultan Alp-Arslan visited his

grandfather's grave in Jand (1066) [Köymen, 1972:78; Sümer, 1965:92-3]. In any case, Selçuk Beg's position there seems to have enabled the Seljuks to negotiate additional pasturage around the village of Nur, between Bokhara and Samarkand, effectively as the Samanid's marchlords. As such the Seljuks seem to have remained loyal to the Samanid dynasty, that is until the last moment when Arslan Yabgu, who was situated in Nur or at least its environs, failed to take the field against the Karakhanid Ilek Khan Nasr.

Having left Jand, Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg are thought to have approached a junior member of the Karakhanid dynasty but seem to have been unsuccessful in gaining satisfactory terms of service. Çağrı Beg's reputed journey across Iran into the Caucasus soon thereafter, however, seems unlikely. An idea that is introduced in this context by Turkish scholars is that Selçuk Beg had been grooming Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg in his stead and therefore that Arslan Yabgu had not only remained in Nur but also kept his nephews at arm's length [Köymen, 1979:35 & 114]. The Samanid Isma'il Muntasir's negotiation with Arslan Yabgu in Jand, however, contradicts this. Furthermore, although Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg were the sons of the eldest Mikail, there is no mention – legendary or otherwise – that Mikail had previously held Arslan's position during Selçuk Beg's latter years. Possibly most telling of all, if Çağrı Beg had been to Azarbayjan and was as successful as claimed, then surely on Arslan Yabgu's imprisonment by Sultan Mahmud his followers would not have hesitated to affiliate themselves with such a charisma? Most likely their failure to remain in Jand with their uncle damaged their reputations. Possibly this is also why Ali Tekin, the Karakhanid ruler of Bokhara, whom Arslan Yabgu supported against his relations until his capture and imprisonment by Sultan Mahmud, is said to have invited Yusuf Yinal to take up the leadership of the

Seljuks as yabgu. That is instead of the older Musa with whom Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg remained.

Contrary to Köymen, Kafesoğlu and Turan, it is also unlikely that Ali Tekin would have had Yusuf Yinal killed because Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg refused to recognise him. Given that Ali Tekin was at odds with the Karakhanid line the Seljuks had been fighting since their arrival in Transoxania, the Seljuks were arguably his natural allies. Consequently, as Sümer proposed, the Seljuks most likely lost Yusuf Yinal and their position in Nur upon Ali Tekin's death, especially as they are said to have defended Ali Tekin against the Ghaznavid Altun-Taş after Sultan Mahmud's death. When Ali Tekin died shortly thereafter, his regent and commander-in-chief, Alp Kara, probably found it expedient to realign with the senior Karakhanids and oust the Seljuks.

The confused political mosaic of Central Asia during this period no doubt encouraged the centrifugal tendency of nomadic pastoral groupings, which needed to act independently because the wrong decision could mean death. The Oguz, Türkmen and Kıpçak, not to mention the Karluk, all seem to have been vying for pasturage while the Karakhanids and Ghaznavids fought over the sedentary spoils left by the Samanids, whom they had defeated separately. Nomadic pastoralists caught up in this situation would have needed to ensure grazing rights and migratory schedules. What better way of securing these than through martial association with regional centres of power? This seems borne out by the Oguz or Türkmen groups in Transoxania other than the Seljuks, such as Hasan Tak who with 5,000 mounted archers deserted Isma'il Muntasir on the battlefield for İlek Khan Nasr. Hasan Tak emerged again two years later, in Khurasan, this time at the head of Sultan Mahmud's forces, which are known to have contained an Oguz contingent [Sümer, 1965:70].

Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg would have been in their mid-teens when the Seljuks left Jand, but they and their guardian Musa stayed together through all the Seljuks' subsequent trials and tribulations. Consequently, he may have been the one who built up their awareness of sedentary statecraft. Current archaeological work near Perowsk suggests that Jand was not a frontier town established by Muslim colonists, but existed well before the spread of Islam into Central Asia [Roux, 2000:251]. Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that during the fifteen years prior to their appearance in Khurasan, Musa and his charges may have wintered in Khwarazm, which was under Ghaznavid governance. This could have served to reinforce their knowledge of Irano-Islamic governmental expectations from Selçuk Beg and Arslan Yabgu's time as the Samanids' marchlords.

#### ***7.4 Migrations and the Türkmen***

Turkish scholars have proposed a variety of reasons for the invasion of the Middle East by the Seljuks and their Türkmen affiliates. Togan implied that it was the result of the Kırğız being displaced by the Khitay in Inner Asia. Kafesoğlu and Turan maintained it was due to overcrowding among the Oguz. According to Köymen, however, the Seljuks' success attracted others to the Middle East. This last seems to be the correct interpretation.

In Togan's opinion, because the Kırğız never took up the Kök Türk's imperial mantle from the Uyğur, whose empire they ended (840), they were driven out of Inner Asia by the Khitay (924), who were of Mongol origin. This precipitated the westward migration of the Kimek (Kuman/Kıpçak) [Togan, 1946]. This argument overlooks that the Khitay subsequently founded the Liao dynasty in northern China (936-1122) and were followed

by the Sung dynasty (960), which quickly established itself in the remainder of China (1004). Unable to expand south, rather it is the Khitay's failed attempt to conquer Kashgar and the Issyk-Köl region that is thought to have caused the Kimek migration (1017) [Arat, IA Vol. 6:713ff].<sup>27</sup>

Originally situated around the Irtysh River, the Kimek appear next in Eastern Europe (1050), having driven the Peçenek and Uz ahead into the Balkans. Possibly this is why by the beginning of Sultan Alp-Arslan's reign a Kıpçak beg ruled in Jand and other Kıpçak mingled with the Oguz/Türkmen in Üst-Yurt (1065-6) [see Sümer, 1965:92]. This seems to indicate that some Kimek had taken up the pastures vacated by the Uz and Peçenek. When not at war with the Oguz, the Kıpçak are said to have migrated south during severe winters [Sümer, 1965:64]. To be sure, there is a strong possibility the Kıpçak wintered in Khwarazm, where they are reported as early as the time of Altun-Taş (1017-1032) [Barthold, 1990:316], but they would still have had to share Oguz pasturage and water on the way. If there were internal pressure on their resources, the Oguz would not have allowed this.

Consequently it seems unlikely that the Seljuks invaded the Middle East due to demographic pressure among the Oguz. Instead, as Köymen argued, it is the Seljuks' success in Khurasan that seems to have attracted others to the Middle East.

Although Sultan Mahmud cleared Khurasan of the Türkmen of Iraq (1028), his eldest son Mas'ud invited back Arslan Yabgu's followers, namely Yağmur, who helped him

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<sup>27</sup> While the Kimek's departure can be likened to that of the Yüeh-chi, it is not known if the Khitay defeated them as the Hsiung-nu had defeated the Yüeh-chi. Moreover, when Chinggis Khan established a Mongol imperial polity, most members were of the Kimek and the Uygur. Consequently, if the Khitay had been successful in establishing an imperial steppe polity, then most likely the Kimek would have remained to share the sedentary spoils.

wrest the throne from his brother Muhammad (1030). On Yağmur's instigation, Kızıl, Gök-Taş and Buka were also allowed back. Although the Türkmen of Iraq continued to serve well on campaign, their conduct remained the focus of local complaints. Distrustful of their intentions as well, Sultan Mas'ud had Yağmur and fifty of their lesser leaders killed – for refusing to be pressed into permanent military service (1033). This caused a series of retaliatory raids by their sons and Kızıl, supported by the Türkmen from Balkhan Mountain and Transoxania. The raids coincided with the Seljuks' falling out with the Karakhanids and the subsequent assassination of their mentor the Khwarazmshah Harun by Sultan Mas'ud. Presumably this is why within months of crossing the Amu-Darya River into Khurasan with only 900 mounted archers, the Seljuks are said to have been able to field 10,000 Türkmen (1035). Given the Türkmen of Iraq's earlier refusal, however, most likely those who now affiliated themselves with the Seljuks were in the main from Balkhan Mountain and Transoxania, not to mention those already in Khurasan.

On receiving news of the Seljuks' arrival, Sultan Mas'ud's vizier remarked that whereas until then their problems had been with shepherds, now it was with erstwhile conquerors [Köymen, 1979:200]. Certainly, Sultan Mas'ud does not appear to have been a match for Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg. Quite apart from his reported predilection for alcohol, which time and again delayed urgent decisions, he is considered to have preferred his own point of view despite good ministerial advice to the contrary. In this he is likened to his father Sultan Mahmud, but without his political acumen. Insistent that his decisions were seen through, Sultan Mas'ud is also thought to have lacked the moral courage to face up to the consequences of his bad judgement, notwithstanding physical courage on the hunt and in combat [Köymen, 1979; also Kafesoğlu, 1953:5 &

Barthold, 1990:313]. Worse yet, during his reign corruption prospered on condition that the perpetrators shared their spoils with him. Accordingly, the Ghaznavid governor for Khurasan, al-Fazl Suri showered Sultan Mas'ud with gifts but extorted twice that from the populace whose leaders repeatedly asked the help of the Karakhanids in Transoxania [Barthold, 1990:313]. This is indicated also by a report sent to Sultan Mas'ud, which cites al-Fazl Suri's cruelty as the underlying reason for growing support for the Seljuks throughout Khurasan. As a result it seems that the Ghaznavid commander for Buzgan brought some 4,000 men after Ibrahim Yinal had entered Nishapur on Tuğrul Beg's behalf with 200 mounted archers (1038). Other Turkic mamluk commanders, such as Böri Tekin, Yusuf, Ali Karib, Gazi and Eryaruk, also deserted to the Seljuks with their soldiery (1039) [Köymen, 1979:260-78].

When Caliph al-Qa'im complained about the Türkmen depredations a few years later (1043/4), Tuğrul Beg is said to have replied that the Seljuks' realms had grown too small for their number. During this period, a good many Türkmen appear to have been encouraged to continue westward [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:393-6]. A large group was directed to Azarbayjan via Tabaristan (1047). There are also the Oguz from Transoxania, who were advised by Ibrahim Yinal that Khurasan could not support their number (1048). Even in comparison to the Gobi and Kara-Kum, the Khurasan steppe is regarded to be almost completely without water and vegetation [Khazanov, 1994]. When this is taken in conjunction with the consideration that pasturage in both Azarbayjan and Anatolia is similar to Central Asia [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:385ff; also Cahen, 1984:77-9], the reports seem highly plausible. Nor must it be forgotten that the route westward appears to have been a familiar one. Most likely because others had fought there earlier [Cahen, 1984:26], Turkic gazi bands are thought to have attempted



passage into Azarbayjan and eastern Anatolia in the middle of the previous century [Frye, 1975:214-5].

Moreover, given the Türkmen directed to Azarbayjan wanted to sack Nishapur (possibly Shapur in Fars [Köymen, 1963:162]), such redirection must have not only alleviated the pillaging of Muslims [*Ibid.* 163], but also severed a possible alliance between the Byzantines and the Fatimids, isolating both in relation to the Seljuks. In this context Köymen mentions Emperor Constantine IX Monomachus' refusal of Tuğrul Beg's request to pass through Byzantine territory in order to attack the Fatimid caliphate, wherein he cited his standing friendship with the caliph (1052/3) [Köymen, 1976:56-7].

### ***7.5 The 'Türkmen Problem'***

Without exception Turkish scholars argued that right from the outset the Seljuks looked favourably upon Irano-Islamic institutions. They pointed to the report that when Tuğrul Beg entered Nishapur he asked the jurist Sa'îd not to withhold his advice as the Seljuks were strangers to Iranian ways (1038) [Sümer, 1965:82; Köymen, 1979:277-8; Kafesoğlu, *IA* Vol. 10:386-7; Turan, 1965:62; Divitçioğlu, 1994:80]. According to Sümer [1965:96], from this time onwards the Seljuks not only placed Iranians in their administration but also favoured the mamluk soldiery that had served them so well at Dandankan, angering the Türkmen.

Although the Seljuks incorporated the existing mamluk soldiery in their military, there is no evidence that these replaced the Türkmen. Consequently, the so-called Türkmen problem requires to be set in the context of Oguz cultural expectations rather than that of an assumed Irano-Islamic continuum.

Divitçioğlu is the only one to have attempted an analysis of what these expectations may have been [1994:85-109]. Apart from arguing that Ibrahim Yinal and Kutalmış rebelled because Tuğrul Beg did not allow them a share of the Seljuk domains, he noted that the pillaging of Muslims arose from the nomadic pastoral inability to produce all the goods necessary for survival. This raises the question that if all the Oguz/Türkmen begs expected to gain from their exploits were sedentary plunder, why did the Seljuks not behave like the so-called Türkmen of Iraq? Although the latter took Rayy and Hamadan, they are not known to have shown any interest in retaining either, except for Kızıl, who prior to his death took up residence in Rayy and married his daughter to Tuğrul Beg. The Seljuks, on the other hand, established an empire by adding Iraq and the remainder of Khurasan to their conquests. That they were intent on doing so well before Dandankan seems clear from the manner of their initial occupation of Nishapur (1038) [see also Köymen, 1979:94-6]. On joining his brother there, Çağrı Beg is said to have proposed its plunder. Having reassured the inhabitants prior to their capitulation that the city would not be sacked, allegedly Tuğrul Beg refused. Çağrı Beg insisted that unless permitted to do so the Türkmen would defect to leaders who would, whereupon Tuğrul Beg is said to have threatened suicide. As a result, the local populace was taxed and the proceeds distributed [Sümer, 1965:91-2; also Köymen, 1979:271].

Divitçioğlu's argument that pillaging arose from the nomadic pastoral inability to produce agricultural and manufactured goods is all the more surprising given his earlier study of the Kök Türk. In this he argued that war, or better still the *threat of war*, ensured that China traded more rather than less silk<sup>28</sup> for the number of horses offered

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<sup>28</sup> On the Inner Asian steppes, in particular silk not only passed for money [Bekin, 1981], but also had ceremonial significance [Allsen, 1997].

as 'tribute' in order to satisfy protocol [Divitçioğlu, 1987:252-66]. To be sure, this is very much in line with recent studies concerning the nature of war and trade between China and the Hsiung-nu, Kök Türk, Uyghur and Mongols [Jagchid & Symons, 1989; Barfield, 1993]. What must not be overlooked, however, is that although the Oguz in Transoxania are said to have accepted trade only when the Samanids were strong enough to resist their raids [Barthold, 1990:275], an essential difference between northern China and Transoxania was the closeness of urban centres. Whereas nomadic pastoralists traded with the Chinese along what came to be called the Great Wall, whether independently or in markets established solely for this purpose, in Transoxania they had much more immediate access to its, for their time, resplendent oasis cities. These cities were the entrepôt of the fabled Silk Road that enabled trade in luxuries such as silk. Moreover, migration cycles were much shorter, given the proximity of summer pasturage in the T'ien-shan, Pamirs and Hindu Kush. While this clearly encouraged agriculture, hence semi-nomadic pastoralism, mounted archers did not have to travel too far to access the self-evident riches of Tashkent, Ferghana, Bokhara and Samarkand. Arguably, therefore, nomadization by pastoralists in terrain suitable for oasis cities, particularly among those on established trade routes, tended to vagabondage rather than trade in times of martial laxity, thus rarely if ever necessitating empires that could also exact tribute.

Having said that, Türkmen expectations are better discussed with reference to the Kök Türk Empire and the later Oguz polity rather than in the context of 'trade or raid'. According to Chinese sources, like the Hsiung-nu, who had 24 hereditary offices [Eberhard, 1942:77], their descendants [Taşağıl, 1995:9-10], the Kök Türk, had 28 hereditary offices [Divitçioğlu, 1987:192]. It is safe to conclude that outside those known to belong to the imperial A-shih-na clan, and thus in part to the A-sheh-tê, these

offices were filled by subordinate ruling lineages [*Ibid.* 192-5; also Tekin, 1988:3, 55, etc.]. It is clear that the Oguz retained some of these titles, such as Erkin, as far as can be determined originally a high-ranking Kök Türk commander, although in their case Kuzerkin seems to have meant Chief Counsellor [*Ibid.* 192; Şeşen, 1975:77]. More importantly, the office appears to have been open to *all* the patriarchs of the descent lines that made up the Oguz polity [Divitçioğlu, 1994:17-9], even if those from one descent line may have predominated [Togan, 1982:139-41].

When this is taken in conjunction with Ibn Fadlan's observations, it is clear that among the Oguz the position of chieftain combined military, administrative and judicial responsibilities, albeit with the aid of a counsellor who appears to have acted as his regent. Consequently, the Türkmen must have expected more than pasturage from the Seljuks in return for their military support. That at times they did not even get this seems clear from their first request of Ibrahim Yinal, namely that they should not be forced to campaign in Iraq al-Arab. Quite apart from the fact that a shortage of pasturage would have been a severe cause of hardship for their horses, the heat would have also affected their pack animals, the Bactrian camel. By all accounts the Türkmen were not paid soldiery. Otherwise, Ibrahim Yinal would not have requested land from Sultan Tuğrul to support his affiliates [Köymen, 1976:61]. So that, forbidden from pillaging, they would have suffered doubly.

This argument may be supported by events that took place both prior to and during Sultan Tuğrul's northern Syrian campaign. When the sultan ordered the Türkmen to bring their families to the environs of Baghdad for the said campaign, they are said to have refused because the countryside in Mesopotamia and Syria could not have provided for them. Instead they asked to be allowed to go on home-leave, to rest their

horses and replenish their supplies (June 1056). Although the sultan had a group caught and beaten, he is said to have rescinded, once the Türkmén gave their word that they would return in the autumn [Köymen, 1976:104-5]. This they must have done, because when Mosul fell to the sultan's forces (May 1057), which appear to have included mamluk soldiery, they wanted to sack the city. Apparently at first the sultan resisted as in Nishapur eighteen years earlier, but then he had the city emptied and the inhabitants compensated for their losses at his expense [Sümer, 1965:103]. In short, rather than exclusion from the Seljuks' administration, or for that matter nomadic pastoral exigency, the question at issue appears to have been one of Türkmén livelihood *in Seljukid service*.

In Sümer's opinion, the Türkmén's second request, that Ibrahim Yinal was not to reconcile with the sultan, concerned specifically the Seljuks' growing preference for mamluk soldiery. His argument was that although initially distrustful of the loyalty of the mamluks who had defected from the Ghaznavids, the Seljuks not only amply rewarded them after Dandankan but spurred on by their prevalence throughout Islamdom also increased their number at the Türkmén's expense. Accordingly, toward the end of Sultan Tuğrul's reign, Turkic commanders such as Erdem, Gawhar-A'in, Humar-Tekin and Ay-Tekin Süleymani all were mamluks [also Köymen, 1967:7-8]. Gawhar-A'in, for instance, was inherited from the Buyids [*Ibid.* 9-10]. Finally, Sümer thought their last request, that the Seljuks' viziers should not be appointed without their consent, indicated that the Türkmén also held the Seljuks' Iranian viziers responsible. He argued that these would have considered mamluk commanders and their soldiery not only more obedient but also better sedentarized than the unruly Türkmén.

To take the last point first, there were other reasons why the Türkmén may have been angry with the Seljuks' Iranian administrators. As will be remembered, although the

Türkmen of Iraq appear to have offered only their martial services in return for being allowed into Khurasan, they had been taxed, losing not only their livestock but also their children when unable to pay. Presumably this is why the Seljuks asked Sultan Mas'ud for local taxes to be handed to them for clearing Khurasan of 'marauding' bands, which must have included the Türkmen. Ostensibly the Ghaznavids complied with this request, regarding the Seljuks as dihkans, local notables who collected taxes. Although possibly neither the Ghaznavids nor the Seljuks had any intention of complying, the Seljuks' victory at Dandankan elevated them into rulers who now had sedentary as well as nomadic pastoral concerns. The point being that the Seljuks' adoption of local administrative practices, at least until these were adapted to their needs, would have led in particular those administrators who were not sympathetic to the Türkmen to 'persecute' them, such as the dihkans who were mainly landowners. Thus possibly the Türkmen request for administrators who recognized them as their conquerors not subjects.

As for their second request, likewise this seems related to Ibrahim Yinal's first rebellion (1050-1), not to the Seljuks' growing preference for mamluk soldiery at the expense of Türkmen begs and their affiliates. The immediate cause of Ibrahim Yinal's first rebellion is traceable to when Tuğrul Beg appropriated Rayy from him as his capital (1042). This is when Ibrahim Yinal is thought to have first made clear his disappointment at not being allowed to keep what he conquered [Köymen, 1963:59]; a situation that must have become particularly galling in view of the position Kara-Arslan Kavurt was to gain in Kirman, not to mention that of Alp-Arslan in Khurasan. After all, Ibrahim Yinal and for that matter Kutalmış were of Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg's generation (see also, 5.5). Given that a ruling Turkic dynasty shared their dominion [*Ibid.*

58; also Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:353ff, Turan, 1965:72ff & Divitçioğlu, 1987:192-5], Köymen's argument was that when Tuğrul Beg later also asked for Hamadan and other lesser fortifications toward Rayy, Ibrahim Yinal refused, and, having left Tuğrul Beg, gathered 'his forces' [*Ibid.* 59]. These 'forces', however, seem to have been the Türkmen situated between Hamadan and Rayy. On being defeated, Ibrahim Yinal is said to have asked Tuğrul Beg to forgive him, which he did. It can be no surprise, therefore, when Ibrahim Yinal asked the Türkmen for support a second time that they stipulated he was not to reconcile ever again with Tuğrul Beg who was now sultan. Ibrahim Yinal does not appear to have sought reconciliation and was strangled with his own bowstring. Kutalmış, who is thought to have joined in the rebellion, did not either. Subsequently defeated by Sultan Tuğrul (1060), he retired to his castle, Girdkuh, where he remained besieged. When the sultan died, he challenged Alp-Arslan, losing his life in the process.

Sümer seems to have overlooked yet another point, which was brought out by Köymen [1963:158-67]. This is that in particular Ibrahim Yinal's rebellions appear to have been crushed with the Türkmen who remained affiliated to Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg. Consequently, regardless of any preference the Seljuks' leadership may have developed for mamluk soldiery, as suggested by the story concerning the northern Syrian campaign, even as late as 1057 the Türkmen seem to have formed by far the larger part of Seljukid forces. Although possibly of an earlier date, this is also reflected by a story concerning Çağrı Beg, who chided his brother for the disrepair of his realms. Apparently Tuğrul Beg responded that he (Çağrı Beg) devastated a built-up region like Khurasan in order to subdue it. Now that it was his, of course he was *obliged* to rebuild it. Not only had Iraq al-Ajam been devastated prior to the Seljuks' arrival, but also it remained surrounded by enemies, *which necessitated Türkmen forces being situated at important*

*cross-roads* (between Hamadan and Rayy?), making further depredation in the region unavoidable [Sümer, 1965:87].

Rather than a preference for mamluk soldiery or Iranian administrators it is the reference to *obligation* that finally serves to put the so-called ‘Türkmen problem’ in its proper context. To be sure, on the Orkhun stone inscriptions erected in his name, Bilge Kagan claims that *I clothed the naked folk, made the poor folk rich, the few many* [Tekin, 1988:45]. Rather than being taken on its own as an ideological tenet [İnalçık, 1993a:10-5; Turan, 1965:72], however, the claim is best understood in reciprocal terms – a framework of obligations [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:389]. In lines 18-9 on the East Face of the stone inscription erected in his name, clearly Bilge Kagan demanded unerring loyalty in return for clothing and food [Tekin, 1988:43; see also Allsen, 1997:53]:

As long as the Celestial Heaven above does not collapse, underneath the Earth is not holed:  
O! Türk folk, who can pull down, disorder your state and laws? Türk folk give up your  
fractious habits and be contrite! By being disobedient you betrayed your sovereign and the  
prosperous state that had fed and satiated you, and introduced discord. From where came the  
armed enemies who defeated and dispersed you? From where came the lanced enemy that  
drove you from your home country? Folk of the sacred Ötüken Mountains, *you* left your  
home country.<sup>29</sup>

Lines 5-10 on the East Face [*Ibid.* 39-41], however, accept that the Türk folk had good cause:

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<sup>29</sup> This passage and the next are my translations of the original text that was edited and translated by Tekin [1988:38-40 & 42].



Without doubt ignorant kagans acceded, without doubt bad kagans acceded. Their commanders, too, without doubt were unwise and without doubt bad. Since the nobles and commoners were not in order, the Chinese wily and false, deceitful, able to set younger brother against elder brother, noble against commoner, the Türk folk lost the state, the kagan it had made. This caused their sons, who were worthy of becoming Chinese nobles to become servants, their equally worthy daughters to become concubines. Türk nobles relinquished their Türk names. As Chinese nobles they held Chinese names, obeyed the Chinese kagan. For fifty years they gave their work and strength. [...] Took their lands and forsook their customs and law for the Chinese kagan. The Türk commoners spoke thus: we were a folk with a state, where is this state now? For whom do we conquer provinces? We were a folk with a kagan, where is our kagan? Which kagan do we serve? Having thus spoken, they became the enemy of the Chinese kagan. Having become the enemy, but unable to organize and order themselves they surrendered again. [...] The Türk God above and the Türk spirits of earth and water did thus without doubt: so that the Türk folk would not be annihilated, would become a nation, held my father Ilteriş Kagan and my mother Ilbilge Khatun at the top of the heavens and without doubt raised them even higher.

Put another way, some of the Türkmén must have likewise felt betrayed by the Seljuks' concern for their non-Turkic vassals and subjects' welfare, regardless of whether like them they were Muslims or not.

This is not to deny that Türkmén also most likely regarded the domains conquered as theirs to plunder rather than to rule. Particularly as Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg only apportioned the realms the Seljuks had conquered among themselves. The Oguz called settled people *yatuk* or *lay-about* [Atalay, 1992/III:14]. Merchants fared no better; *sart* [*ibid.* I:342 & III:13], derived from *sari-it* or yellow-cur came to be applied to all sedentary people in Central Asia, not only merchants [Barthold, IA Vol. 10:236-7].

Nevertheless, even though 'Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg may have adopted the existing system of government, it seems that neither İbrahim Yınal nor Kutalmış, let alone lesser Türkmen begs, appear to have received their share of the revenues thus gained. While pasturage in Khurasan and to a larger degree in Azarbayjan and eastern Anatolia may have been similar to that available in Central Asia, Khwarazm and Iraq were in the main agricultural and urban. This appears to have created friction not only with the local tax collectors but also with the populace the Türkmen plundered.

Instead of assigning part of the tax revenue to the Türkmen, Tuğrul Beg appears to have created the opportunity for those who did not want to keep public order according to the customs and laws of Islamdom to feed and clothe themselves in Armenia and eastern Anatolia, which were suitably Christian. By appointing members of the dynasty to lead the Türkmen there, Tuğrul Beg may have thought that he had fulfilled his obligations as a Turkic sovereign, even if the Seljuks could not claim to be of the highest descent. Whatever his thoughts on the matter, in return he seems to have expected unerring obedience.

### *7.6 The Conquest of Anatolia*

Kafesoğlu [IA Vol. 10:369] and Turan [1965:106 & 1971b:1-44] were of the opinion that the conquest of Anatolia was necessitated by the size of Türkmen migration from Central Asia. According to Köymen [1963:239ff], it was İbrahim Yınal's defeat of the combined forces of Katakalon, Aaron and Prince Liparit near Erzurum that encouraged Tuğrul Beg to invade.

These views overlook several aspects that must be taken into consideration for the Seljuks' victory at Malazgirt and the subsequent establishment of a dynastic offshoot in Anatolia can begin to be put in perspective. On the whole Turkish scholarship does not seem to have addressed the issues raised by events that led up to the Battle of Malazgirt or that followed it, let alone analysed the battle itself. For instance, Turan simply accepts the Seljuks faced a 200,000-strong Byzantine force with as little as 50,000 men [1971b:25]. For their part, the military historians Süer and Çakın, like Köymen, impose a conventional formation on the Seljuks' when evidence for nomadic pastoral warfare clearly contradicts this.

To begin with, although the Seljuks seem to have redirected new migrants from Central Asia to Azarbayjan and eastern Anatolia, the state of Byzantine defences in the region cannot be ignored. After all, before the arrival of the Türkmen, the Byzantines had successfully reversed attempts by both the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates. It is all the more instructive, therefore, that the Chinese graded nomadic pastoral incursions as follows: looting border areas, robbing border areas, border encroachment, invasion, a great invasion, deep invasion and large-scale invasion [Jagchid & Symons, 1989:24].

### ***7.6.1 Incursion***

Like their kinfolk in Inner Asia, at first the Türkmen appear to have merely looted and robbed border areas from the Mughan steppe (see Appendix 1, map A1.4), with the help of the Shaddadids through whose domains they most likely returned (1042-5). Although this may have alerted them to the parlous state of Byzantine arms (see below, 7.6.2), Köymen's argument was that at the time even Azarbayjan was not as yet safe for

the 'Türkmen habitation. Accordingly, Tuğrul Beg assigned Yabgu Kalan's son Hasan and Çağrı Beg's son Yakuti to secure the region. When Hasan (possibly with Yakuti) encroached across the border into Anatolia, however, he lost his life in a battle with Katakalon and Aaron (1047), the generals for Ani and Van respectively (the Armenian kingdoms of Ani and Vaspurakan being Byzantine protectorates at the time). Certainly, Tuğrul Beg then seems to have assigned Ibrahim Yinal to avenge Hasan's death, which he did by invading Anatolia. Whether or not the Türkmen continued to raid the Byzantine Empire after Tuğrul Beg made peace, however, is not clear (1050). What is known is that Tuğrul Beg was otherwise occupied in Iraq al-Ajam with the Buyids, not to mention Ibrahim Yinal's rebellion.

What is known is that four years later Tuğrul Beg took command of the Türkmen at the head of his own forces (see Appendix 1, map A1.4). Although various dynasties in eastern Anatolia proclaimed their allegiance and raids were conducted as far north as the Caucasus, Tuğrul Beg was unable to take the fortress of Malazgirt despite besieging it with Armenian help. Clearly, however, the Seljuks already regarded this redoubt as central to their operations. Moreover, Tuğrul Beg appears to have left behind one of his commanders, Sabuk Beg, with three thousand men. Yakuti and Sabuk Beg are said to have won every engagement against Briennios (1057). The following year Ani and Kars were besieged and Malatya sacked. On Sultan Tuğrul's orders, two years later the Türkmen once again invaded Anatolia. This time Sivas was sacked and Urfa besieged by Salar-i Khurasan, possibly a mamluk commander. After another Byzantine army was defeated (1061), Sultan Tuğrul journeyed to Azarbayjan to review Yakuti's conduct of operations (1062).

The problem for the Seljuks seems to have been one of gaining a foothold in the mountain fastness of eastern Anatolia in order to ensure the Türkmen's safe return and to protect their northern flank and rear, their main pastures being in Azarbayjan. Another consideration may have been control of the trade routes through the Caucasus and Arran. It is not surprising, therefore, that during his first campaign (1063), having cleared the Caucasus as far north as Tbilisi, Sultan Alp-Arslan's forces not only took numerous fortifications and walled towns situated in north-eastern Anatolia, including the walled city of Ani, but also torched them (see Appendix 1, map A1.5). Soon afterwards the Seljuks seem to have finally taken the fortress of Malazgirt and established a base in Ahlat, under the command of Gümüş-Tekin, a mamluk commander (1066). From here, until they fell out, Gümüş-Tekin and Afşin Beg are known to have taken fortifications between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, which clearly impeded safe return to Ahlat from sorties into central and south-eastern Anatolia. It was only when Afşin Beg fell out with Gümüş-Tekin and killed him that Türkmen raids are reported also from Aleppo, which is where Afşin Beg took refuge after having sacked Kayseri and raided as far inland as Konya (1067) (see Appendix 1, map A1.5).

When Romanos Diogenes became emperor, therefore, Anatolia was under attack from not only the northeast and east but also the southeast. More importantly, however, the looting of border areas from Azarbayjan had turned into a large-scale invasion from eastern Anatolia. The emperor's first two campaigns (1068-9) clearly reflect this fact (see also Appendix 1, map A1.6).

In order to appreciate the remarkable consequences of Sultan Alp-Arslan's resounding victory at Malazgirt (1071), however, the Byzantine Empire's provincial administration

needs to be examined. The underlying point being that this was not the first time the Byzantines had to defend Anatolia from raiding, quite to the contrary. The Arabs had been doing so regularly since the establishment of the Umayyad Caliphate and had gained a foothold in eastern Anatolia that survived well into Abbasid times.

### **7.6.2 Defence**

Faced with a sharp fall in tax revenue on losing more than half of its domains at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, it seems that during the reign of Emperor Constans II (641-68) the Byzantine Empire was organized into provinces under military governance (*themes*). It is thought that by granting most of the remaining imperial estates on a hereditary basis, Constans II made Byzantine soldiery self-supporting, selling them arms from state owned depots (c.659) [Treadgold, 1995:21-5]. Initially there were seven such themes in Anatolia and possibly another three in the Balkans, which had been mostly overrun by the Slavs. Subsequently the number of themes rose, but it is doubted that the rise in the number of soldiery was proportionate. This increase appears to have been caused as much by the subsequent expansion of the Byzantine Empire as by the breaking-up of rebellious themes [*Ibid.* 25-8; Oman, 1924:179-84; also Dupuy, 1984:52ff]. The point being that the frontier themes defended the Byzantine Empire's borders while the soldiery in the inner themes maintained order, both being supported by the tagmata, heavy cavalry troops formed by Constantine V (741-5), which were independent of the provincial garrisons.

On their south-eastern Anatolian border, the Byzantines attempted to keep the passes in the Toros and Antitoros Mountains under regular observation so as to gain advance

warning of Muslim raids launched from Tarsus and Adana, and later more frequently from northern Syria. It is thought that on being alerted, the nearest battalion tried to track the raiders while the main cavalry corps gathered. At the same time available infantry were sent to the passes by which the Muslims were expected to return. These were the Cilician Gates and those of Adata and Melitene. Once gathered, the Byzantine cavalry either attacked, or, if the raiding party was too large, defended until reinforcements arrived from neighbouring provinces. If the raiders retreated before they could be engaged, then the Byzantines endeavoured to attack their camp at night with infantry and/or dismounted cavalry. Their best results seem to have been gained if their infantry were deployed at the right passes at the right time. A case in point was Nicephorus Phocas' brother Leo's victory over Sayf al-Dawla, the Hamdanid Amir of Aleppo (963). In this instance Sayf al-Dawla tried to return by the same mountain pass he had entered Anatolia, possibly losing as many as 4,000 men and his booty, barely saving his own life [*Ibid.* 209-17; also Treadgold, 1995:30].

After this, however, Muslim raids seem to have fallen off if not totally ceased. Possibly this is why toward the end of Basil II's reign (976-1025) and more so at the start of that of Constantine IX Monomachus (1042-55) civil administrators replaced the governors general whose rebellions the latter had to suppress (see also above, 4.3). Constantine IX Monomachus also debased the coinage, possibly to reduce army pay, and relieved the Armeno-Cappadocian provinces of their obligation of universal military service, taxing them instead [Treadgold, 1995:40; also Oman, 1924:180]. Arguably without their so-called Iberian Army, a total of 50,000 men of the themes that stretched northeast from between Urfa and Kayseri into the Caucasus, the Byzantines were no longer able to withstand the Türkmen incursions [*Ibid.* 214-9]. In many cases soldieries appear to have

been reduced to plundering such that warlords arose in castles with subject villages whose inhabitants served as infantry [Oman, 1924:180; also footnote 20]. Nor must it be forgotten that during their incorporation into the Byzantine Empire, the Armenians suffered persecution and relocation, which is thought to have made them less than loyal (footnotes 18 & 19). In short, Malazgirt appears to have been a ‘do or die’ battle for the Byzantine Empire in Anatolia.

### **7.6.3 Malazgirt**

Turkish scholars estimated that the force Romanos Diogenes gathered on the banks of the Sakarya River before Malazgirt was almost 100,000-strong, including 30,000 auxiliaries with 3,000 supply wagons. According to the *Tactica*, a military manual compiled during the reign of Leo VI (886-912) [Dupuy, 1984:53], there should have been two carts and a pack horse for every 16 foot soldiers (decury), a battalion or regiment (banda or numerus) consisting of 480 men [Oman, 1924:191]. Consequently, 3,000 supply wagons suggest 24,000 infantry. Each battalion could also expect support from a surgeon with six to eight stretcher-bearers [*Ibid.*], or 3,450 medical staff. In addition there would have been the engineering units attached to each corps (thema) [*Ibid.*],<sup>30</sup> not to mention a siege machine that required 1,200 men to operate. In short, 30,000 infantry *and* auxiliaries seems consistent with 3,000 supply wagons.

Again according to the *Tactica*, it is thought that the number of infantry in a Byzantine formation varied between 11% and 54% [*Ibid.* 196; also Dupuy, 1984:57-9]. To take the

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<sup>30</sup> A Byzantine corps consisted of two to three divisions (*turma*), which were made up of five to eight regiments or battalions [Dupuy, 1984:54-5].



latter percentage first, it is unlikely the emperor would have embarked on a campaign against an enemy wholly consisting of cavalry with only 25,000 of his own. A cavalry force of 300,000, not to mention half a million as some Muslim sources report [Sümer & Sevim, 1971], seems equally unlikely, despite mercenaries and soldiery from metropolitan and Balkan provinces [Oman, 1924:219]. There is, however, the report that Romanos Diogenes brought over the five Balkan tagmata, all told 12,000 men. These are thought to have been in addition to the 12,000 in Anatolia and the Varangian Guard of 6,000 mercenaries, which makes a total of up to 30,000 heavy cavalry. Separately there are the 5,000 cavalry known to have been garrisoned in Tarsus and as roughly a quarter of each provincial corps elsewhere seems to have been cavalry, another 1,000 in Antakya. In addition there is the cavalry of the disbanded Iberian Army, which Romanos Diogenes tried to drill back into a fighting force. Of these 12,000 are thought to have been of the Christianized Banu Habib, who deserted to the Byzantines in 934 and are assumed to have kept up their numbers. Since the Iberian Army seems to have totalled 50,000 men, this suggests that there were another 9,500 cavalry besides the Banu Habib [Treadgold, 1995:34, 79-80, 83-5, 116-7 & 216]. This would make a possible 57,500 cavalry without the soldiery from Cappadocia, which is known to have been on the field. Nor does this include the Uz and the Peçenek. Consequently, fifty-five to sixty thousand Byzantine cavalry with 15,000 auxiliaries seems a reasonable assumption [Oman, 1924:191 & 219].

The force dispatched to help the Bagratid dynasty may have been mostly infantry in order to strengthen their defences against the Seljuks. After Sultan Alp-Arslan's campaign into Georgia (1066), the Türkmén appear to have raided along the rivers and streams stretching from Tbilisi into Anatolia south of the Pontic Mountains (1070) (see

Appendix 1, map A1.7). Likewise, infantry would have held the fortress of Malazgirt. There is also the infantry under Trachaniotes, who with Roussel was dispatched to take Ahlat [*Ibid.* 194]. Although Roussel's Normans most likely were heavy cavalry, it seems, therefore, that Romanos Diogenes had almost all his cavalry with him on the battlefield. Consequently, the Byzantines are unlikely to have been 100,000-strong at Malazgirt, as Turkish scholars have assumed.

As for the Seljuks, it is doubtful they numbered forty to fifty-five thousand, let alone 100,000 or more as some western European military historians have suggested [*Ibid.* 219]. In all probability even the twelve core tribes of the Kök Türk could not field more than 60,000 men. It can only have been with the addition of the Tokuz Oguz and other affiliated tribes that the Kök Türk Empire was able to put 400,000 men in the field [Divitçioğlu, 1987:210]. The Seljuks and the Türkmen made up but a fraction of the lineages once affiliated to the Kök Türk. To be sure, the sultan's reported route from Aleppo suggests that he may have recruited additional soldiery before being joined by Sabuk Beg and the Türkmen in Ahlat (see Appendix 1, map A1.8). Hence the assumption by Turkish scholars of Kurdish cavalry at Malazgirt. Nevertheless, if Sultan Alp-Arslan had outnumbered Romanos Diogenes, it is doubtful that the emperor would have risked a purely cavalry battle, let alone pursued the Seljuks on the field. This seems to be confirmed by Sultan Alp-Arslan's reported attempt at reconciliation before battle.

Despite reports concerning the Uz and Peçenek defections, Trachaniotes and Roussel's refusal to rejoin as ordered, or indeed Andronicos Ducas' dislike for the emperor, it appears that Romanos Diogenes' disregarded all that the Byzantines had learnt of steppe warfare during previous centuries [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 7:242ff; see also Oman, 1924:219 & Dupuy, 1984:61]. This knowledge was readily available in military manuals

[Dirimtekin, 1993:230ff]. Besides the *Tactica*, there is the earlier *Strategicon*, which is thought to have been compiled during the reign of Emperor Maurice (582-602) [Dupuy, 1984:53], not to mention the work by Nicephorus Phocas (c.980) [Oman, 1924:215].

According to the *Tactica*, which is accepted as having been based on the *Strategicon*, when combating a Turkic foe, generals were advised to protect their rear (with a natural obstacle if possible), take care of their flanks, never pursue blindly (or become separated), but engage at close quarters as soon as possible [*Ibid.* 206]. More importantly, the *Tactica* also recommended a front line of heavy infantry, supported by foot archers whose bows were bigger than those the cavalry had and hence shot further [*Ibid.* 206]. The Turkic composite bow, on the other hand, included a layer of split horn on the stave toward the archer. This gave it greater penetrative power and a range over 300 meters. Although at that distance the arrows were ineffective against chain mail, at least until the Ottomans developed a superior bow in the 15<sup>th</sup> century [see Dupuy, 1984:4-5], the Byzantine heavy cavalry could not match their firepower. If foot archers were able to shoot their mounts from underneath them, however, Turkic horsemen became vulnerable to both bowshot and lance as they wore little if any armour. Nor must it be forgotten that cavalry can not close if the infantry stand steadfast, as horses will shy away [also MacDowall, 1995:26-7].

The problem was that mounted archers continually harassed with interchangeable groups, until death, fatigue and mounting frustration forced gaps in the enemy line. The gaps were then charged in wedge shaped formations known since the Scythians [*Ibid.* 23; see also Maenchen-Helfen, 1973:201ff]. However, this was difficult to effect against heavy infantry supported by cavalry, since the latter could parry flanking manoeuvres. Moreover, well drilled foot soldiers were more likely to keep to prescribed distances in

the heat of battle, something compressed cavalry formations could not do, as horses tend to panic when close to each other [*Ibid.* 24]. Consequently, the feigned retreat, which was an integral part of steppe warfare, invariably lured wholly cavalry formations into giving chase, particularly as their aristocratic members remained eager to inflict shock combat. Mounted archers gave the appearance of fleeing in disparate groups rather than executing an orderly retreat. As both riders and horses had different temperaments and battle experience, groups tended to disjoin in such circumstances [*Ibid.* 24-5], breaking up the chain of command. Having separated and tired their heavily armoured foe by feigning flight [*Ibid.* 21], mounted archers turned, encircled and began to shoot in arcade. This could demoralize the most battle hardened troops thus forced to stand their ground. Usually, therefore, when not able to fall back on their heavy infantry, the more inexperienced riders panicked, those better disciplined being captured or annihilated with them by ever larger groups gathered for the kill with sword, pike and mace.

There is no doubt that armour impeded mobility [Jankovich, 1971:29], quickly tiring both horse and rider, but mounting a horse did not give the sedentary rider parity with those off the steppes. Hsiung-nu children rode calves and foals, the smallest riding sheep and goats while shooting arrows at field mice, small birds and poppies [Kafesoğlu, 1994:209]. Nearly two centuries after Malazgirt, according to the oft-cited report by Johannes Plano de Carpini who was on an abortive ambassadorial mission to Mongolia (1245-7), two to three year old children could not only sit in the saddle but also gallop a horse. Nor could sedentary horses match the mobility of the hardy steppe mounts [Köymen, 1967:56-7 & 59]. Although smaller, these were more manoeuvrable because of their high neck carriage, not to mention their long, thin limbs and hard

hooves [Kafesoğlu, 1994:206; see also Maenchen-Helfen, 1973:203-21], which gave them speed and resilience. Taken in conjunction with the large hunting drives conducted each autumn (*kurt oymu*, or the wolf's game) that served as war games [*Ibid.* 274; also Ögel, 1993], it is clear that no matter how well-drilled, sedentary cavalry remained hard put to combat superior Turkic horsemanship and archery.

It is more than likely, therefore, that Romanos Diogenes would have survived to fight another day if he had retained his infantry units rather than relied on the numerical superiority of his cavalry. Arguably he attempted to close because his heavy cavalry was no match for the Seljuks. Once gaps opened on his flanks and units became separated, however, they had no steadfast infantry to fall back on. In the confusion he seems to have been unable to effect an orderly retreat, losing touch with his reserve. Forced to face about and stand his ground, possibly he dismounted and turned his heavy cavalry into infantry as prescribed in the *Strategicon* [MacDowall, 1995:24]. Even if so, however, his heavily armoured men would have been tired by then if not also demoralized, and the Seljuks' armoured mamluks comparatively fresh, which would have made all the difference in close combat. Whatever the case, encircled, gradually most of the remaining Byzantine heavy cavalry seems to have been annihilated with the exception of the reserve, thought to have consisted mainly of mercenaries and Armenian nobility [Oman, 1924:219-21; see also Dupuy, 1984:61].

#### ***7.6.4 The Seljuks of Anatolia***

Sultan Malik-Shah clearly continued from where his great-uncle and father left off by repeated campaigns in the Caucasus (1075-6, 1078-9, 1084 & 1086). Nevertheless, he is

considered to have been at best ambivalent if not outright hostile toward the Türkmen. Thus his latter two campaigns are interpreted as attempts to control Türkmen migration into Anatolia [Turan, 1971b:77; also Cahen, 1984:93-4].

Although Sultan Alp-Arslan seems to have taken responsibility for the Caucasus and Anatolia – possibly due to the death of Yakuti who is not mentioned in the apportionment after his accession – with the unification of the Great Seljuk Empire under one ruler, the Türkmen could no longer have been led as it were ‘from the saddle’. Arguably this is why soon afterwards the sultan appointed a mamluk commander, Gümüş-Tekin, to supervise Türkmen raids into Anatolia, which came to be launched from Ahlat (1066). The Türkmen, however, appear to have expected a Seljukid. Thus possibly Gümüş-Tekin’s death at the hands of the Türkmen beg Bekçioğlu Afşin, who was quite happy to report to Sultan Alp-Arslan once he had been pardoned. Particularly so soon after Malazgirt, Sultan Alp-Arslan’s death arguably created a power vacuum while Sultan Malik-Shah dealt with Kavurt, then the Karakhanids and Ghaznavids, one that was filled by Kutalmış’s sons. This is why Sultan Malik-Shah’s approach may appear ambivalent. To be sure, there are the various reported attempts at reconciliation between the Seljuks and the Byzantines, whether through the good office of the caliph or directly. On the other hand, there were also the repeated campaigns conducted by mamluk commanders. These invariably ended with inconclusive sieges of Iznik, which suggests that like his great-uncle and father, Sultan Malik-Shah considered the Türkmen in Anatolia in his dominion – even if Kutalmış’s sons did not.

It is also unlikely that the caliph unilaterally proclaimed Süleyman-Shah sultan, as this would have been feasible only prior to Kavurt’s defeat. Sultan Malik-Shah did not move

against the Karakhanids until the caliph confirmed his status (1073). Nor is Süleyman-Shah's elder brother Mansur thought to have died until much later (1078). As for the reports that Süleyman-Shah was appointed sultan by Malik-Shah, why were neither his brothers nor his sons released upon his death? It was only upon Sultan Malik-Shah's death that Kılıç Arslan emerged in Anatolia, very much as his father and uncles did when Sultan Alp-Arslan died. Moreover, despite his assurances to the contrary, when the Seljuks' Uqailid vassal Muslim asked for the annual tax Philaretos Brachamios had promised for Antakya, if as Süleyman-Shah claimed he was also Malik-Shah's vassal, arguably he would not have been asked to pay or for that matter attacked the Uqailids, let alone appointed a Fatimid jurist (1085-6). Therefore, contrary to Köymen [1963:102-7] and Kafesoğlu [1953:75 & IA Vol. 10:391], as Turan argued [IA Vol. 11:210-12], most likely Süleyman-Shah appeared subservient to Sultan Malik-Shah in order to rid himself of his brothers, particularly the older Mansur, and thus gain dominion in Anatolia. Once confident of his gains, Süleyman-Shah appears to have declared himself sultan unilaterally.

As for the argument that Süleyman-Shah behaved like a Byzantine rather than a Seljukid vassal and hence that the Türkmén in Anatolia would have become incorporated into the Byzantine Empire [Cahen, 1984:88-92], this must be considered doubtful to say the least. Emperor Alexius' peace agreement with Süleyman-Shah strongly suggests that in the wake of their defeat at Malazgirt, the Byzantine Empire had no central authority left in Anatolia (1082). No matter how temporary, Süleyman-Shah's customs' bureaux on the Bosphorus certainly appear to confirm this.

Consequently, on Süleyman-Shah's defeat by Tutuş and his death (1086), Sultan Malik-Shah, although he did not journey to Anatolia, appears to have made sure that neither

al-Kasim nor another beg gained dominion over the 'Türkmen [Köymen, 1963:109]. Under pressure from the Byzantines who seem to have used Porsuk and Bozan's campaigns to regain territory, when at last he did journey to Isfahan to proclaim allegiance, al-Kasim was strangled with his own bowstring, with or without Sultan Malik-Shah's consent. The sultan's reported offer of some seaports in his request for Emperor Alexius' daughter in marriage to his son, not to mention the reputed proclamations of allegiance by the begs of Konya and Aksaray, further strengthen the argument that after Malazgirt the Seljuks became established not only in the countryside but also in the towns of Anatolia – whether or not they had Byzantine help such as from Nicephorus Melissenos.

Despite the self-evident enmity between the two main branches of the Seljuks, namely Arslan's and Mikail's descendants, Sultan Malik-Shah's continued concern with the Caucasus (1075-6, 1078-9, 1084 & 1086) also suggests that there was a steady migration through here into Anatolia. These campaigns were in the main against the Georgians, but it must not be forgotten that Sultan Alp-Arslan also returned here during Romanos Diogenes' first and second Anatolian campaigns (1068/9). This was when the region is said to have first come under pressure from the Kimek migration. This is thought to have pushed the Alan, Komuk, Sabir, and various remnants of the Khazars, into the Caucasus.

Certainly, the mountainous neck of land between the Black Sea and the Caspian appears to have been the favoured route for Turkic migrations into Anatolia. According to Togan, the Bulgars from the Volga region were the first Turkic people to arrive in north-eastern Anatolia (149-129 BCE). Next the Sabirs moved into Azarbayjan from the south Caucasus (305). According to Byzantine sources, during the 5<sup>th</sup> century some



of the Huns also centred themselves on the Mughan steppe (445). Two decades afterwards the Ağaçeri, a ruling lineage of the Huns, arrived in Azarbayjan (465). In short, the argument is that 'Turkic people were situated in the Caucasus, Azarbayjan and north-eastern Anatolia from before the start of the Common Era [Togan, 1946:168-171]. The Byzantines' known resettlement of some Avars in Anatolia (577 & 620) [Kalafat, 1992:29],<sup>31</sup> not to mention the Abbasids' eastern Anatolian Sugur Army, which is thought to have consisted of Türkmen (760) [*Ibid.* 26], lend further support to this line of reasoning (see also above, 7.5). The Seljuks' conquest of Anatolia, therefore, may have been facilitated not only by the existence there of people of Turkic descent, but also by the familiarity of its Greek, Armenian, Slavic and other local populaces with immigrants per se.

Yet another factor that must be considered in this context is the seeming hostility to Byzantine rule in western Anatolia, which appears to have remained mainly Greek. It is difficult to explain how else Çaka Beg and al-Kasim could have undertaken to build navies that were clearly intended to challenge those of the Byzantines in both the Aegean and Marmara seas. As much seems to be indicated also by the inhabitants of Izmit. Although only 90 kms from Istanbul, before they let in the Byzantine commander Eustathios, reportedly they had to be persuaded that al-Kasim and Emperor Alexius Comnenus had agreed to jointly defend the city against Sultan Malik-Shah's commander Porsuk.

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<sup>31</sup> Possibly the following villages in present day Turkey were originally Avar settlements: Avadan (Tarsus and Eskişehir), Avaduri (Midyat), Avakent (Kulp, Diyarbakır), Avak (Trak, Hisn Kayfa), Avalama (Konya), Avan (Şirvan, Hisn Kayfa), Avana (Borçka), Avanoğlu (Kırşehir), Avanoşığı (Pazarcık, Kahramanmaraş), Avora (Niksar, Tokat), Avarek (Van), Avarık (Egin), Avas (Bakırköy, Istanbul), Avasorik (Erciş, Van), Avason (Manavgat) and Avasor (Muradiye, Van) [*Ibid.*].

In short, immediately after Malazgirt the Seljuks seem to have benefited not only from contention among Byzantine generals for Emperor Michael VII Ducas' throne, but also from those local populaces ill disposed to being ruled from Istanbul. The more so since clearly Byzantine governance in Anatolia had fallen into disarray before most of what remained there of its military was destroyed on the battlefield. Familiarity with previous Turkic re-settlements throughout Anatolia – not to mention their descendants – may have also simplified matters for the Seljuks and the new immigrants, Oguz or other.

### **7.7 Governance**

As has been noted in reference to the 'Türkmen problem' (see above, 7.5), without exception Turkish scholars agreed with Köprülü that the Seljuks took over Irano-Islamic institutions. They thought this tendency was most prevalent during Nizam al-Mulk's vizierate (1063-92), particularly during the reign of Sultan Malik-Shah (1072-92).

On the evidence presented by Turkish scholars, however, the Seljuks appear to have acted in greater accord with their cultural origins than hitherto proposed. Arguably the reasons for this lie in the predominance of mounted archery before the advent of gunpowder, because it helped to reinforce Turkic expectations and ideology.

A weapon with superior range tends to dominate battle formations [Fuller, 1998:21]. Since speed and mobility likewise command offensive considerations [*Ibid.* 23], it is not surprising that nomadic pastoral cultures, which were able to combine archery with equestrian pursuits quite naturally, came to raid and try to wear down their foe before delivering the finishing blow. By comparison, in sedentary cultures, archery cloaked the

deployment of other weapons [*Ibid.* 21], mainly because agriculturists remained well adapted to infantry action, or shock combat. The problem with this was that on their own foot soldiers could not attack cavalry [*Ibid.* 68; also MacDowall, 1995:3-6]. Consequently, in order to defeat the growing armies of mounted archers, sedentary people were forced more and more to rely on cavalry [Dupuy, 1984:36ff].

As equestrian pursuits were not part of a sedentary culture's daily concerns, however, horses had to be bred specially [MacDowall, 1995:10-14]. There was also the expense of their upkeep and drill [*Ibid.*]. Nor must it be forgotten that archery required constant application [Dupuy, 1984:41]. Byzantine military manuals urged every subject and, if that was not possible, then each household to possess a bow and forty arrows for target practice [Oman, 1924:179]. When not hired, therefore, cavalry and/or archers were almost without exception of noble birth. The development of armour, which few could afford, reinforced this tendency because it required special breeds of horses [Dupuy, 1984:38; also Oman, 1924:126-30]. Besides the weight of its own chain mail, a mount bore a rider equipped with steel casque, mail shirt, gauntlets, steel shoes, large iron stirrups, shield, long lance and broadsword. Byzantine heavy cavalry also carried a dagger, axe, bow and quiver of arrows [*Ibid.* 56].

Although the Assyrians were the first to establish a professional army, their cavalry were drawn from their nobility (c.700 BCE) [*Ibid.* 7]. In ancient Greece, archers came from nobles who could not afford horses [Fuller, 1998:38]. Alexander the Great's *Companions*, his heavy cavalry of young Macedonian noblemen, were supported on the flanks by mercenary Thessalian cavalry and similar light cavalry units (356-23 BCE) [Dupuy, 1984:36-7]. When the Romans were forced to switch emphasis from infantry to cavalry due to disastrous campaigns against the Persians (363) and the Goths (378), not to

mention the Huns soon thereafter, their armies came to include allies (*foederati*) or mercenaries (*bucellarii*) [Oman, 1924:8-21 & 176-7; also Dupuy, 1984:36-41]. Their inclusion appears to have enabled rich nobles as well as generals to form their own armies despite legal sanctions (476) [MacDowall, 1995:6-7]. Eventually the Byzantines were able to settle their armies, the bulk of their heavy cavalry becoming 'small free landowners' [Oman, 1924:189].

The turning point for Muslim arms seems to have come during the Abbasid Civil War (809-37), when Caliph al-Amin's (809-13) 40,000-strong force was defeated outside Rayy by at most 5,000 cavalry sent from Khurasan by his brother al-Ma'mun (811). While Caliph al-Ma'mun is thought to have prevaricated whether to govern from Marv or return to Baghdad, its siege having ended with Caliph al-Amin's execution (813), the youngest brother, al-Mu'tasim, seems to have begun to build a personal army (814-5). Although this appears to have been founded on slaves trained for military service, such as Ithak, a Khazar cook, not to mention Turkic slaves supplied by the Samanids, it also included Transoxanian princes such as Afšin. Furthermore, even though many of these 'slave' soldiers hardly spoke Arabic in their lifetimes, their sons were integrated into Muslim society. Possibly as a result, at first slaves do not seem to have been distinguished as such in the caliphate's new military élite. At least, that is, until the latter half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, when ghilman or mamluks, as they came to be known, replaced them. Recruited mostly by Turkic men of arms, who remained responsible for their keep, they appear to have led celibate lives, some going so far as to become eunuchs. However, even they were not all slaves. For instance, Anuş-Tekin al-Dizbari, who was from Khurasan, is thought to have become a mamluk of his own accord in order to further his prospects, retaining his mentor the Dailamite Dizbar's name as a mark of

respect. Not surprisingly, the allegiance of such men was to their leader [Kennedy, 1994:148-160 & 206-7].

It is this last aspect, that of allegiance rather than slavery, which seems to have been the key consideration as concerns the Seljuks, too, particularly in view of the martial traditions that are known to have prevailed on the Eurasian steppes with respect to fealty in the pursuit of power. The Seljuks were mounted archers; their steppe origins are clearly discernible not only in the manner in which the T'ürkmen overran Anatolia under their leadership, but also in the martial and secular character of their governance.

### *7.7.1 Warrior Élites*

The origins of these can be traced to before the emergence of a state, namely to attempts at resolving disputes peacefully through the good offices of elders. This common tribal feature concerned chiefs without coercive powers, who did not necessarily lead in raids either but could be appointed for a definite tenure of office to an executive and judicial council. By contrast, fighting men who banded together could gainsay a council's authority through their self-evident ability to enforce decisions. Better still, unlike chiefs who lost face when unable to resolve a quarrel within the common code, warriors could seek out certain types of wrongdoers and compel redress or mete out punishment. When confronted with new kinds of dispute such men could also make law. Most important of all, social groupings could be achieved on a basis other than kinship although the outcome might once again be expressed in terms of descent. In short, warfare gave autonomous power to the group that practised it [Gluckman, 1977].

On the Eurasian steppes men who had distinguished themselves by their skill in hunting and combat are thought to have banded together in stockades, called *pi-yung* by the Chinese chroniclers of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE, a word not considered to be of Chinese origin. These fortifications, which consisted of an outer and an inner wall within which the warlord lived, came to be called *ordu* or palace, thus its application to the cities of Turkic rulers. Apart from the Chou dynasty (c.1122-256 BCE), which is thought to have emerged from such a warrior band [Esin, 1980b:9-25]. A better example is the rise to power of Modun, the founder of the Hsiung-nu Empire (209 BCE to 155 CE), whose name is thought to redact to *Batur* or *Bagatur* (Moduk~Mokduk~Makdur~Bakdur [Lattimore, 1967:450]), Turkic for hero or brave. According to an oft-repeated story, Modun trained his loyal band of warriors to follow suit on the signal of his whistling arrow. First he took aim at one of his favorite horses. Those who failed to follow through were killed. After those who hesitated to kill one of his consorts met the same end, Modun aimed at one of his father's horses. When his warrior band shot it, at the next opportunity he loosed his whistling arrow at his father and became kagan, or more correctly Shan-yü.

Like Modun who had the Yüeh-chi ruler's lopped skull lined with gold and encased in leather after he had drunk his blood from it, men of his ilk wore a drinking cup on their belts, which even if not the skull of their first kill, symbolized the same. First recorded among the Scythians, this practice is known also among the Oguz [Esin, 1980b:9-25].

The latter's warrior bands are thought to have consisted of an alp<sup>32</sup> and those who had sworn fealty to him [Köprülü, IA Vol. 1:379-84]. Certainly it seems that among the descendants of the Kanglı and Töles, too, there were warrior élites of twenty or more men who only accepted the leadership of one of their own, demanding to be buried alive alongside upon his death [Esin, 1980b:9-25]. This practice is thought to have been prevalent also among the Kök Türk [Divitçioğlu, 1987:206], not to mention the Angles and Saxons [Divitçioğlu, 1992:113-29], or Germanic cultures such as the Visigoths [Oman, 1924:177]. The traditions surrounding warrior élites, however, did not have to be so binding. The city rulers in Transoxania are thought to have had guard corps consisting of the sons of the local aristocracy. In Samarkand, the most courageous of these warriors (called shakir or çaker<sup>33</sup>) held an annual banquet where anyone who touched the food on the table had to fight to the death. The survivor was expected to repeat the challenge the next year [Barthold, 1990:195-7].

Social inequality among nomadic pastoralists could come about not only through martial skill and the virtue of courage but also through 'herding luck'. In the latter case, however, excess livestock tended to be entrusted to poorer families.<sup>34</sup> An alp who gathered around him others of his ilk in order to consolidate his standing was obliged to feed and clothe his men. As already discussed (see above, 7.1), he would not have

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<sup>32</sup> Thought to go back to at least the 5<sup>th</sup> century, *alp* (also *alpagan*, *alpavut*, or *yılpagan*) means hero, brave, or stout-hearted, whereas *alpaganut* distinguishes an *alp* who takes on his enemies single-handed, one who can not be caught from any side. An *alp* is thought to have showed prowess not only through bravery and skill in combat but also from childhood as a hunter and rider. Consequently, as late as the 13<sup>th</sup> century, in Anatolia an *alp* who killed a tiger tied its tail to his wrist. Appropriately enough, the modern Turkish word for bragging (*böbürlenmek*) is derived from *bebiir* (also *babr* or *bebr*), a type of tiger wild and vicious enough to tear apart an elephant [Köprülü, IA Vol. 1:379-84; Atalay, 1992/I:144, III:368 & IV:639].

<sup>33</sup> From *çaqar*, which in Turkic meant courtyard or fortified camp [Forard, 1961:10].

<sup>34</sup> In effect a form of reciprocity enabling the redistribution of wealth without the risks inherent in taking on indigent kinsmen or maintaining servants. According to Gluckman [1977], these latter forms remain prevalent among settled tribal communities where people without family, livestock, or land provide wealthier members with a visible numeric measure of their standing, as impoverished kinsmen or household servants. Such individuals, however, are not considered the property of another and can release themselves through service.

done so at the expense of his herd. This further encouraged nomadic pastoral raids on other communities for agricultural or manufactured goods, not to mention livestock. In Central Asia, these had a human bonus. Captives were sold in the main to slave-traders who marketed them throughout Islamdom, but among the Kök Türk those retained as servants (kul) are thought to have possibly formed the nuclei of warrior élites [Divitçioğlu, 1987:191].<sup>35</sup>

The reported behaviour of the mamluk Gawhar-A'in, whom the last Buyid ruler transferred to his son Abu Nasr, has striking similarities with those warriors who chose to be buried alive with their lord. When Tuğrul Beg imprisoned Abu Nasr, Gawhar-A'in seems to have remained at his master's side until his death. Subsequently appointed commander of Baghdad by Sultan Alp-Arslan, Gawhar-A'in was wounded while attempting to prevent him being stabbed to death. Gawhar-A'in went on to serve sultans Malik-Shah and Berk-Yaruk [Köymen, 1967:9-10].

Mamluks such as Gawhar-A'in are thought to have been picked mainly from youths purchased on the slave market [*Ibid.* 12]. There are also the 50,000 captives Sultan Alp-Arslan is said to have taken while in the Caucasus. The 7,000 Armenian mamluks who were expelled despite Nizam al-Mulk's objections during Sultan Malik-Shah's reign, because Turkic commanders objected [Sümer, 1965:95], may have been of these captives. According to the vizier, it took twenty years to train a Samanid mamluk commander. This is why Köymen thought that at least initially the Seljuks inherited their

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<sup>35</sup> It is known for instance that among the Huns warriors captured in battle were 'enslaved', but could purchase their freedom with their share of subsequent booty [Maenchen-Helfen, 1973:199]. Quite apart from the obvious fact that nomadic pastoral 'slaves' could easily escape unless employed in the household, this is also consistent with the point raised in the previous footnote. In other words, such men were not property, but part of a reciprocal system. As a élite, they would have enjoyed considerable privileges despite their 'enslaved' status.



mamluks. Certainly a long period of training may be indicated by the increased mention of mamluk commanders toward the end of Sultan Tuğrul's reign, which may explain why their names remained to the fore during the first 3-4 years of Sultan Alp-Arslan's reign; the implication being that his mamluks became ready to take up positions of command only later. Nevertheless, Köymen suggests that in view of the importance Nizam al-Mulk attached to the training of mamluks in his *Siyasat-Nama*, it is doubtful that even during Sultan Malik-Shah's reign their training was institutionalized in the Samanid manner. According to Köymen, it seems rather that 'slave' soldiers were trained and equipped by a 'Turkic' 'master' who served in the palace before being assigned to campaigns or regional posts [Köymen, 1967:12-5 & 1966]. Doubtless such service was intended to engender loyalty to the sultan's person. Arguably this is reflected in Sultan Malik-Shah's reported trepidation concerning Nizam al-Mulk's mamluk soldiery, said to have been more than 1,000-strong. The vizier was allowed to keep them only after he was able to persuade the sultan that they were in the service of the Seljuks, not his person [see Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 10:389 & Özeydin, 2001:202-7].

Sultan Malik-Shah's royal mamluk corps billeted at the capital Isfahan is thought to have numbered 46,000 [Kafesoğlu, 1953:156-8]. Whether or not these included foot soldiers capable of shock combat<sup>36</sup> or siege warfare [Köymen, 1967:43-73], however, is not clear. Nor is it clear how many of them were auxiliaries or novices. Be that as it may, according to Kafesoğlu, soldiery from the empire's core regions could augment these so that the Seljuks are thought to have been able to field 300,000 men, excluding soldiery

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<sup>36</sup> There can be little doubt that the Kök Türk under Bilge Kagan had a royal corps, since Sebig Kül Erkin is named as its commander [Tekin, 1988:55]. Moreover, steppe tactics did not preclude shock troops. The stone inscription erected for Tonyukuk, the Commander-in-Chief and Counsellor to the Kök Türk *kagans*, clearly states: *two squadrons were on horseback, one squadron was on foot*. There is also a reference to *foot soldiers* on the stone inscription erected for Bilge Kagan [*Ibid.* 49 & 1994:3].

from vassal states or the 'Türkmen [1953:156-163]. On the other hand, Yınanç [1944:174-6], and possibly therefore Turan [IA Vol. 5/2:949ff], argued that the 300,000 soldiery mentioned by Nizam al-Mulk in the *Siyasat-Nama* were in the main the 'Türkmen in Iraq al-Ajam and al-Arab. Turan's argument was that by adapting the existing structures of land holding in line with Turkic expectations Nizam al-Mulk enabled the 'Türkmen to gain means of support through agriculture and commerce rather than pillage [also Lewis, 1993:161].

What is clear is that even as late as the reign of Sultan Malik-Shah there were 'Türkmen begs in the royal corps [Köymen, 1972:93-5]. Artuk, Çubuk and Yağ-Sıyan are cases in point [*Ibid.*; also Sümer, 1965:97]. Aksungur is thought to have been of the Kıpçak Sabyu clan. Since his father El-Turgan was named Abdallah, presumably the clan converted to Islam upon entering the Seljuks' service. Said to have been trained with the mamluk soldiery on Sultan Malik-Shah's orders, he became governor of Aleppo [Sevim, 1990b:72]. Yağ-Sıyan also was appointed governor at Antakya. Consequently, rather than adopting the mamluk system because of their Iranian viziers' preference for 'slaves' instead of freemen, as the most illustrious alps of their time, the Seljuks seem to have taken care to recreate a martial structure akin to those prevalent on the Eurasian steppes since at least the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE.

### ***7.7.2 The Iqta'***

The conclusion of Turkish scholars that many of the institutions Nizam al-Mulk promoted under Sultan Alp-Arslan and Malik-Shah are traceable to the Samanids, because he was trained by and worked for the Ghaznavid administration in Khurasan, is

most evident in the proliferation of madrasas under the Seljuks [Köymen, 1975b]. By comparison, the other administrative development, namely the Seljuks' widespread and correspondingly varied use of the *iqta'*, does not seem to have evolved under the Samanids or the Ghaznavids, but rather under the Abbasids, that is, before being passed on to the Seljuks through the Buyids. The *iqta'* sheds light on how the Seljuks supported their warrior élite.

An *iqta'* was originally known as a *qati'a*, namely land vacated by the vanquished, in particular by the Sasanians in Iraq al-Arab. From as early as the reign of Caliph Umar (634-44) these were granted on a hereditary basis to Arabs, mostly individuals but sometimes a tribal group. Nevertheless, there were lands still managed by their indigenous owners. Appropriations granted to Arabs on such land allowed them to pay the *ushr* (alms tax collected from Muslims) from the *kharaj* (land tax collected from non-Muslims), the balance being their remuneration as citizen warriors (*jund*). Possibly with the incorporation of non-Arabs into the military, in time the latter type of holding appears to have fused with the former, that is become private property. Interestingly enough, however, after an attempted coup against Caliph al-Muqtadir (908-32), his vizier is said to have granted *iqta'*s to the Turkic mamluk commanders as before, that is, the holder collected the *kharaj* but only paid the *ushr* in return for the provision of fully trained and equipped soldiery. Under the Buyids, who were also unable to pay their mamluks, this type, known as *iqta' al-istighlal*, distinguished a grant of usufruct that enabled the recipient commander, the *muqta'*, to collect taxes calculated to approximate his remuneration. By comparison, *iqta' al-tamlik* denoted private ownership or more

correctly the hereditary character of land grants [Turan, *IA* Vol. 5/2:950-2; also Kuçur, *DVIA* Vol. 22:47-8 & Kennedy, 1994:192-3].<sup>37</sup>

That being so, under Mu'izz al-Dawla (932-67), having depleted their grants some commanders returned them. Since those who retained theirs continued to complain that the taxes collected did not approximate to their expected remuneration, Mu'izz al-Dawla is said to have been forced to otherwise reward the former while extending the latter's grants. Despite appointing relatives to oversee such grants, Mu'izz al-Dawla failed to prevent continued extortion by commanders. In Turan's opinion, commanders who continued to reside elsewhere in peacetime could not have had any interest in developing their grants. This was why, he argued, the grant of usufruct acquired a hereditary character under the Seljuks, to encourage the muqta' in the management and policing of his iqta' during peacetime – as well as providing fully trained and equipped soldiery on the proceeds. Thus, if on the death of the holder his son was a minor, then a deputy was appointed until he came of age. In the absence of direct descendants, the grant was allocated to his brother(s) or failing that his mamluk(s). However, in keeping with the definition of usufruct, the land on which it had been granted could not be gifted or sold to another, nor put into a pious foundation (waqf). Moreover, the local inhabitants remained free not only to appeal directly to the sultan's court, if they felt their rights were being usurped by the muqta', but also to move for whatever reason. Not surprisingly, many grants were reallocated during a lifetime, either due to mismanagement or reappointment. Furthermore, according to Turan the grant was still approved in writing by the caliph as in theory all authority in Islamdom was delegated,

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<sup>37</sup> It must be pointed out that critics such as Akpınar [1993:47] are quite wrong to claim that according to Turan the Seljuks invented the said grants of usufruct. As such the criticism is more correctly levelled at Kafesoğlu [*IA* Vol. 10:399], who clearly ignored Turan and followed Köprülü.

whereas under the Seljuks this ceased to be so [*Ibid.*]. Although presumably at first the caliph continued to authorise such grants, according to Turan ownership of a grant of usufruct thus became customary rather than *Shari* [*Ibid.*], and hence different from not only iqta<sup>c</sup> al-tamlik, that is, private property, but also iqta<sup>c</sup> al-istighlal [IA Vol. 5/2: 951ff; also Kafesoğlu, 1953:165].

It must be pointed out, however, that his examples concerning both hereditary and customary characteristics are from later periods, particularly from Anatolia and Mosul during the time of the atabegs. Nor is it clear which periods he refers to in the case of the large administrative iqta<sup>c</sup>s he says prevailed in Iraq al-Arab. In this context he notes that by comparison in Iraq al-Ajam the smaller military iqta<sup>c</sup>s were incorporated in hierarchical fashion into larger administrative ones, some of which had to remit a percentage of the taxes collected to the central treasury [*Ibid.* 956-7].

To be sure, according to Lambton, under the Buyids iqta<sup>c</sup>s where the muqta<sup>c</sup> had administrative functions normally associated with a governor remained the exception [1980/X:368]. 'This type of iqta<sup>c</sup> seems to stem from the reign of Caliph al-Ma'mun (813-33), when Azarbayjan was offered on this basis in hope of suppressing the prolonged Babak rebellion (816-37) during the Abbasid Civil War (809-33). Accordingly, in return for an agreed remittance, several commanders appear to have tried but failed to govern the region with forces financed from tax revenue, that is until Caliph al-Mu'tasim's (833-42) Turkic mamluk Afşin. Apparently, Azarbayjan and Armenia continued to be governed by Turkic men of arms, first by Afşin's commander Moyun Çor, then al-Bokhara and finally by the al-Saj of whom Yusuf seems to have agreed once again to remit a nominal amount to Caliph al-Muqtadir (908-32). As noted above, Caliph al-Muqtadir's vizier granted other iqta<sup>c</sup>s to the Turkic mamluk commanders on

the basis that the holder collected the kharaj but only paid the ushr [Kennedy, 1994:156, 166, 184 & 192-3; Togan, IA Vol. 2:100]. Under the Buyids military iqta's do not appear to have been granted for life either, except that if the muqta<sup>c</sup> died his family received a pension [Lambton, 1980/X:367]. This seems to have been to forestall a grant of usufruct defaulting to one of possession as before.

Having said that, Turan's main point was that from the beginning the Seljuks were inclined to treat iqta's very much like appanages. Possibly as yet unaware of Köymen's research, the results of which were published a decade later, Turan took the apportionment by Sultan Alp-Arslan as his starting point. Accordingly, after the granting of some of the caliph's iqta's to the Türkmén (1073), the system became fully established by the end of Sultan Malik-Shah's reign, as evidenced, according to Turan, in south-eastern Anatolia and northern Syria [IA Vol. 5/2:952-3]. This overlooks the fact that the mamluk commanders inherited from the Buyids already had iqta's. Moreover, according to Köymen [1976:61], Ibrahim Yinal asked Sultan Tuğrul to grant him an iqta<sup>c</sup> in order to support his forces. So that even if Tuğrul Beg's grants to the Ghaznavids' mamluk commanders after Dandankan were not as yet called iqta's, it seems clear that from his time on the word was part of official Seljuk vocabulary.

This may explain why lands along probable campaign routes used to stockpile provisions and fodder for the royal corps were referred to as iqta's [Lambton, 1980/X:372], although technically they were 'crown' lands (hass). There are other cases, too. Khwarazm appears to have been governed by Arslan-Argun, but the Sultan Malik-Shah's Tashtdar, the Khwarazmshah Anuş-Tekin, was also referred to as 'governor'. Anuş-Tekin seems to have been granted a percentage of the taxes levied in Khwarazm

in remuneration for his expenses as the chamberlain responsible for the sultan's ewers and bowls [Kafesoğlu, 1956:36-7].

A better perspective of land holdings under the Great Seljuks may possibly be gained from the organization of their Treasury. Incomes from 'crown' lands appear to have gone into the Private Treasury, as did those from non-Muslim vassals and also presumably plunder gained on campaign. Taxes from the provinces and presumably also tribute from Muslim vassals went into the Public Treasury, any shortfall in the latter being supplemented 'temporarily' from the former. Although Kafesoğlu thought that non-administrative iqta<sup>c</sup> holders were exempt from the ushr [1953:145-6, 164 & 166], this is unlikely.

In short, it seems that the Seljuks used the Buyids' iqta<sup>c</sup> al-istighlal only for the royal mamluk corps, the 200-strong royal guard being paid in cash [*Ibid.* 156-9]. Of those in the royal corps, however, the trainees (kara gulam) and mamluk soldiery not yet of appropriate rank (otak başı, ser-hayl, sarhang, hadım, hajib and finally salar or amir) also appear to have been salaried [Köymen, 1967:14-5, 24 & 40-1]. It is not clear whether the iqta<sup>c</sup>s of the forty commanders presented to Caliph al-Muqtadi on Sultan Malik-Shah's first visit to Baghdad (March 13, 1087) were military, administrative, or both [*Ibid.* 30]. Certainly, Antakya, Urfa and Aleppo were administrative iqta<sup>c</sup>s.

Last but not least, while Kavurt's daughters' iqta<sup>c</sup>s were for their dowries [Köymen, 1972:88], Türkan Khatun had her own diwan and mamluk soldiery. There seem to have been yet other iqta<sup>c</sup>s, such as those granted to government officials, which although on occasion could be increased on merit, were nevertheless approximated to the remunerative requirements of their office, not their person. The distinguishing characteristic between these and the caliph's or the lesser Seljuk khatuns' grants seems

to have been the provision that each iqta<sup>c</sup> holder train and equip a required number of mamluks [Kafesoğlu, 1953:164].

### *7.8 The Question of Legitimacy*

Turkish historians accepted that the Abbasid caliphs' ambition was to regain sovereignty over Islamdom. Although Kafesoğlu and Köymen treated the relationship between the Seljuks and the Abbasids in dynastic terms, on the whole Turkish historians have failed to explore the tensions inherent in the Seljuks' expectation that the Abbasid caliphs also legitimize their rule. Instead they have tended to present the Seljuks as the saviours of Sunni Islamdom who treated the Abbasid caliphs with reverence until challenged.

To be sure, the problem of legitimacy was not unique to the Seljuks. Although the Twelver Shi'ite Buyids had the khutba read in Caliph al-Qa'im's name, the Sunni Marwanid and Mirdasid dynasties in south-eastern Anatolia and northern Syria had the khutba read in the Fatimid caliph's name. When on Sultan Tuğrul's death Caliph al-Qa'im tried to re-assert his political authority by inviting the local dynasts to usurp Seljukid rule under his leadership, the Sunni Uqailid Muslim entered Baghdad and, having taken up residence in the Seljuk's palace, pillaged the caliph's. It appears that he left only after it became clear that Alp-Arslan had gained undisputed control of the Great Seljuk Empire. Nearly a century later, the hostility of Dubays al-Sadaqa, the ruler of Hilla, toward Caliph al-Mustarshid seems to have been based on a similar concern.

Despite Tuğrul Beg's request for recognition immediately after Dandankan (1040), Caliph al-Qa'im does not appear to have responded until some years later when he appealed to the Seljuks to have peaceful relations with the Buyids (1043/4). Tuğrul



Beg's response seems clear; daughters were not exchanged in marriage between the Seljuks and the Buyids until Caliph al-Qa'im issued an edict that legitimized the Seljuks' sovereignty, six years after the event (1046/7). Even after Buyid rule began to unravel in internecine warfare (1048), such that Arslan al-Basasiri, their commander in Baghdad, had the khutba read in his name (1050), Tuğrul Beg is said to have declined the caliph's invitation and instead sent an envoy (1052). It appears that Tuğrul Beg arrived in Baghdad at the head of his army only after the caliph had persuaded the Buyid ruler al-Rahim to proclaim his allegiance (1055). Despite the caliph's protests Tuğrul Beg then imprisoned al-Rahim on the pretext of causing the riots that started on the Seljuks' arrival. Arguably, therefore, Tuğrul Beg used the caliph's good office to put an end to the Buyids, rather than championing Sunni Islam against the Shi'ite heresy as Turkish historians such as Turan have proposed.

This is not to deny that Tuğrul Beg dispatched Kutalmış to deal with Arslan al-Basasiri. Or that when Kutalmış was defeated (1056), he advanced on Arslan al-Basasiri with the help of Ibrahim Yinal and Yakuti, forcing him to withdraw to Syria. On his return to Baghdad, the caliph declared Tuğrul Beg sultan (1058). Even if as Köymen claims Tuğrul Beg was insistent that the caliph hand over all temporal rights [1963:178-9], he notes that the caliph intervened on rumours that Ibrahim Yinal was going to rebel. Accordingly, Ibrahim Yinal was called for an audience with Caliph al-Qa'im's vizier. As a result, Sultan Tuğrul seems to have been persuaded to remain in Baghdad and instead assign Ibrahim Yinal to deal with al-Basasiri. To be sure, when Sultan Tuğrul pursued Ibrahim Yinal after the latter had rebelled by declaring his allegiance to the Fatimids, Arslan al-Basasiri took Caliph al-Qa'im prisoner. On Ibrahim Yinal's demise, however, Sultan Tuğrul did not attempt to free the caliph until his offer of peace was rejected by

al-Basasiri, who insisted the khutba was read in the Fatimid caliph's name. Since the Seljuks' legitimacy would have suffered an irredeemable blow, Sultan Tuğrul appears to have won over the caliph's captor, Quraysh, and having secured Caliph al-Qa'im's release advanced on al-Basasiri.

While Çağrı Beg's daughter Arslan Khatun's marriage to the caliph and later Sultan Tuğrul's to the caliph's daughter seem to have been childless, there is no indication that in either case the Seljuks wanted someone with their blood to become caliph [Köymen, 1963:189ff]. Sultan Alp-Arslan's daughter Fülane's marriage to the then heir apparent al-Muqtadi also appears to have been childless, possibly due to the sultan's subsequent death, but it may be noteworthy that the ceremony is said to have taken place in Nishapur not Baghdad. To be sure, Sultan Malik-Shah's daughter Mah Melek's marriage to Caliph al-Muqtadi was not childless. However, given that Ja'far was the youngest of the caliph's sons, the fact that Sultan Malik-Shah demanded Ja'far be appointed heir apparent arguably contradicts the opinions of Turkish scholars. Both Köymen [*Ibid.*] and Kafesoğlu [IA Vol. 10:364, 367 & 1953:96] argued that the exchange of daughters between the Seljuks and the Abbasids were dynastic, while Turan [1965:99] thought that from the marriages were an expression of religious reverence by the Seljuks.

Once he had secured the throne, Sultan Malik-Shah sent the chief jurist for Khwarazm to the caliph to arrange the marriage of his daughter Mah Melek. Instead the jurist advised Caliph al-Muqtadi not to take a 'coarse' Türkmen into his household. Interestingly enough, when confronted by Nizam al-Mulk, the jurist is said to have retorted that *I am not one to sell my religion for the world!* After the exchange of daughters during Sultan Tuğrul's reign, however, the caliph could not have ignored Sultan Malik-Shah's request. Particularly as al-Muqtadi had married Sultan Alp-Arslan's daughter

Fülane Khatun when heir apparent. Consequently, most likely also under pressure from the sultan, the caliph appears to have been forced to ask for Mah Melek through the good office of Nizam al-Mulk. If this were not sufficiently humiliating, then Tūrkan Khatun's demands certainly would have brought home to him that the Seljuks thought more of worldly affairs, as the remark attributed to the chief jurist for Khwarazm also implies. As Mah Melek's mother, she had at first demanded 400,000 dinars, which both the Karakhanid and Ghaznavid dynasties were offering. After Çağrı Beg's daughter Arslan Khatun who had been married to Caliph al-Qa'im had intervened, Tūrkan Khatun is said to have had accepted 50,000 dinars on condition that the caliph was not to maintain or entertain any other women and that at all times he would keep Mah Melek by his side (1081). It is for this reason that Caliph al-Muqtadi's marriage is thought not to have taken place until his first wife had died (1087). In any case, the Seljuks' intentions appear to have been made absolutely clear to the caliph soon after the birth of his son Ja'far from Mah Melek Khatun. His expulsion of Mah Melek Khatun's Turkic retinue from his palace in Baghdad probably was in response to Sultan Malik-Shah's demand that he designate his grandson heir apparent although the youngest of four. Once Mah Melek Khatun had returned with Ja'far, who was referred to by the Seljuks as *Amir al-Müminin*, commander of all Muslims – a title reserved for the caliph – Tūrkan Khatun had a palace built for him in Isfahan. Soon afterwards the caliph had his eldest son Ahmad designated heir apparent [Kitapçı, 1994:109-52; Işılta, IA Vol. 8:573ff; Kafesoğlu, 1953: 207; Turan, 1965:169-73].

Kafesoğlu thought that possibly Tūrkan Khatun had the sultan poisoned in conspiracy with the caliph. Given Nizam al-Mulk and hence his dependants' support for the heir apparent Berk-Yaruk, even with the vizier out of the way Tūrkan Khatun needed the

caliph's support to designate her four-year-old son Mahmud heir apparent and become regent. Thus, the argument goes, she was willing also to sacrifice Ja'far [1953:208-10]. Turan went further still; he thought that rather than the sultan it was Tūrkan Khatun who wanted to gain control of both the empire and the caliphate [1965:170]. Kitapçı did not agree with either of his predecessors [1994:153-6], leaning more toward Işiltan's view that the caliph had the sultan poisoned in order to remain in Baghdad [IA Vol. 8:573ff]. Köymen appears to have preferred silence, only mentioning that a Seljukid princess married a caliph during Sultan Malik-Shah's reign [1963:193].

Whatever role personal ambition may have played, these arguments ignore the broader context of Turkic legitimacy. The earliest known Kōk Türk stone inscription at Bugut (581), which is in Soghdian, not only reflects Buddhist but also Zoroastrian influences, not to mention Chinese ones. Certainly, Taspar Kagan (572-81), in whose name the Bugut stone was inscribed, appears to have been a devout Buddhist. This is taken to indicate that in particular between 570 and 590 the Kōk Türk thought Buddhism would better enable dominion, given that they waged war for universal peace and unity – good relations between the Heavens and the Earth [Roux, 1994:17-8].<sup>38</sup> By contrast, more than a century later, the Orkhun stone inscriptions, which frequently refer to a Kōk Tengri (Supreme Celestial Being, hence the modern Turkish for Allah, Tanrı) and a pantheon of deities and spirits, do not even refer to shamans [Tekin, 1988 & 1994]. Arguably when all was in order, under a kagan who merited divine favour, there was no

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<sup>38</sup> Arguably this is the source of the Turkic concept of *world dominion* noted by Köprülü and propounded by Kafesoğlu [IA Vol. 10:392] and Turan [1993]. The more so since the Turks and later the Mongols insisted that as there is one Supreme Celestial Being in the Heavens so there can be only one ruler on the Earth [Roux, 2001:61]. To be sure, on the steppe sovereignty may have been expressed as extending from where the sun rose to where it set. However, rather than *world dominion* this explains better the bipartite division into Left and Right observed among Turkic polities, hence possibly also the title of *the Ruler of the East and the West*.

need for shamans or monks. When their empire had dispersed, however, Kök Tengri, too, paled into insignificance, so that local beliefs once again came to the fore [İnan, 1995:26; also Roux, 1994:53 & 92]. The point being that under the Kök Türk legitimacy and religion were united through kinship and descent in the A-shih-na dynasty, which maintained the rule of law.

Although the Kök Türk kagans do not appear to have been sacred, the Khazar kagans, who also stemmed from the A-shih-na clan, were. There are also the Uygur and possibly the Kırgız rulers, who were taboo [Divitçioğlu, 1987:129]. To be sure, among the Oguz sovereignty appears to have been on felicitous merit, but there is no evidence that religious and political functions were separate. Quite to the contrary, they seem to have been shared among the nobility alongside their martial functions. As affiliates of the Oguz, the Seljuks must have been aware of the basis of dominion under both the Kök Türk and the Khazar. The former were their ancestors and the latter their contemporaries. Not surprisingly, the Seljuks seem to have tried to become ascendant throughout their empire on a similar premise.

During the interregnum and immediately after the Abbasid Caliphate appears to have rubber-stamped the legitimacy of royal claimants to the Seljuk throne. The caliphs al-Mustarshid and al-Rashid, on the other hand, lost their lives when they attempted to play one claimant off against another in an attempt to gain independence. The problem was that when the moment of truth came each was found wanting because military power remained in the hands of the Seljuks' Turkic commanders and the Türkmen. The Arab or Kurdish dynasts appear to have been neither strong enough nor willing to return to the days when an Abbasid caliph could demand absolute obedience, because as the Prophet Muhammad's successor he was the leader of the Muslim community.

### *7.9 The Question of Succession*

Neither common ownership nor the pursuit of divine favour on the battlefield as Turkish scholars have proposed explain the situation the Seljuks found themselves in on the death of Sultan Malik-Shah. In order to understand the problems they appear to have come face to face with so suddenly it is necessary to separate issues of kinship and descent from each other as well as from the basis on which decisions were taken in consultation among nomadic pastoralists. When this is done, arguably Turkic succession ceases to be indeterminate in principle as historians as diverse as Sümer [1965:7] and Barfield [1989:134 & 143] have proposed it was.

Tuğrul and Çağrı Begs' father is thought to have been the eldest of Selçuk Beg's sons. Since Mikail was dead, Arslan was referred to as yabgu. Although Musa was the senior, upon Arslan's imprisonment, Ali Tekin appears to have appointed the youngest Yusuf Yinal yabgu. After Ali Tekin had Yusuf killed, possibly because Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg refused to acknowledge his appointment, Musa came to be referred to as Yabgu Kalan, literally the Yabgu Remaining. This is not to deny that Sultan Tuğrul was not only younger than Çağrı Beg but in the absence of sons of his own also chose his brother's youngest Süleyman heir apparent. What must not be forgotten, however, is that on the steppe the youngest son inherited the family hearth, since the older sons were expected to have taken their inheritances and set up on their own, even if they continued to share water and pasturage. Thus at Turkic campsites, the eldest son's tent appears to have been pitched next to the father's, where the youngest son stayed, then came the father's brothers' tents, starting from the eldest [İnalçık, 1993b:51 & 54]. In the case of an empire, therefore, it seems possible to assume that the eldest son was the one expected to head the dynasty on the sovereign's death, while the youngest took possession of

what was under his father's direct dominion, the so-called 'hearthlands'. This appears to be confirmed by both Mongol and Ottoman practices [*Ibid.* 49-52]. Consequently, rather than the Great Seljuk Empire, Sultan 'Tuğrul may have been bequeathing *his* domains to Süleyman, whose mother he had married upon his brother's death (leviratus), the remainder of the empire already having been apportioned among Çağrı Beg's sons.

Çağrı Beg's eldest son, Kavurt, not only challenged Sultan 'Tuğrul's will, but also continued to question Alp-Arslan's right to be sultan, although ostensibly this had been gained on the battlefield. Likewise, as Malik-Shah was the second of Sultan Alp-Arslan's sons, in his testament the sultan seems to have expected his eldest son, Ayaz, to object to his accession. Interestingly enough, however, once again it was Kara-Arslan Kavurt who challenged Sultan Malik-Shah, stating that as his uncle he was senior. Sultan Malik-Shah's response is equally interesting in that he claimed the Seljuk throne was his because inheritance was from father to son. Sultan Malik-Shah designated his eldest heir apparent, that is, Türkan Khatun's son Ahmad (1077-87) [Özaydın, 2001:6], and when he died, Berk-Yaruk. Türkan Khatun's insistence that her son Mahmud accede upon the sultan's death was based on seniority of birth [*Ibid.* 16]. She was not only a Karakhanid (see below) but also Sultan Malik-Shah's first wife, his marriage to his first cousin Zubaydah Khatun possibly being a derivative of the principle of leviratus in that Yakuti *and* his wife may have died before their children had come of age. Nobility of birth may also explain the 'bloodless' defeats that Muhammad Tapar suffered at the hands of Berk-Yaruk after Muayyad al-Mulk's death. Both Muhammad Tapar and his uterine brother Sancar appear to have been born of a concubine.

'The Seljuks' dynastic struggles clearly echo those of their ancestors, the Kök Türk. Of the two brothers who founded the Kök Türk Empire (552-741), which at its height

encompassed all but the westernmost steppe cultures, Bumin Kagan (542-52) seems to have been older than Istemi Kagan (552-76). When Bumin Kagan died, however, Istemi Kagan did not come east and claim seniority. Instead Bumin Kagan's sons, Kara (552-3), Mukan (553-72) and 'Taspar (572-81) followed as Great Kagan, although according to one report Bumin Kagan's brother A-i became Great Kagan before Kara [Taşağıl, 1995:18]. Problems did not arise until 'Taspar Kagan's death, possibly because both Mukan and 'Taspar Kagan were already well established and in each case the previous Great Kagan willed that the office should pass to them [*Ibid.* 19 & 27]. According to 'Taspar Kagan, however, since Mukan Kagan had passed over his son 'Ta-lo-pien in his testament, the favour should be returned.

The problem with this seems to have been that 'Ta-lo-pien was not of a Türk mother, being the offspring of a marriage of dynastic convenience. Mukan Kagan's Türk wife was childless. Kara Kagan's son She-t'u is said to have stated at the council gathered to decide the matter that for this reason he would support 'Taspar Kagan's son An-lo, but not 'Ta-lo-pien. Although An-lo was confirmed, he was not able to establish order and the council reconvened, She-t'u becoming İşbara Kagan (582-7) with An-lo's consent [*Ibid.* 34-5]. 'Ta-lo-pien, who became A-po Kagan, and more importantly Istemi Kagan's son 'Tardu Kagan (576-603) who with the death of his uncle's sons was now the most senior of the ruling A-shih-na lineage, objected, pitching the Kök Türk Empire into a protracted period of inner strife coincident with its collapse. Although İşbara Kagan was succeeded by his brother Baga Kagan (587-8), when his son Tou-lan Kagan (588-600) took over, An-lo's son Jan-Kan who became Ch'i-min Kagan (599-609) also refused to accept either 'Tou-lan or 'Tardu as Great Kagan [*Ibid.* 35-63; also Barfield, 1989:133-8].



According to Divitçioğlu [1987:137-50; also Barfield, 1989:136], Kök Türk succession was inherently problematic because they regarded their brothers' sons to be brothers, but not the brothers' grandsons who were related back only to their fathers. True as this may be, it does not necessarily explain the war of succession among the A-shih-na during the rejuvenation of the Kök Türk Empire. It is not known whether Bilge Kagan (716-34) and his father Kutlug Ilteriş Kagan's (682-92) younger brother Kapagan Kagan's (692-716) sons were 'brothers' or 'cousins'. What can be said is that Kül Tekin, Bilge Kagan's younger brother, killed all of Kapagan Kagan's clan, thereby ensuring accession by seniority from within the ruling A-shih-na lineage until the demise of the empire.

What was never in question throughout the history of the Kök Türk Empire was the A-shih-na's right to office. The overriding importance of descent is discernible also among the Oguz. The rulers listed in both Rashid al-Din and Bahadır Khan's versions of the *Oguz-Nama* seem to have been mostly from the senior Kayı lineage, which according to legend derived its genealogy from Oguz Khan's *eldest* son Kün Khan [also İnalcık, 1993b:54-5], whose mother came from the Heavens to the Earth in a shaft of blue light. That said, in both versions of the *Oguz-Nama* the appellation *Inal* or brother-in-law appears frequently as a ruler's name alongside that of *Kayı* and *Yavquy* (yabgu). Togan argued that this indicated the Karakhanids gave their daughters in marriage to the Kayı in order to raise their lineage to Oguz Khan [1982:133-4]. Certainly, upon the demise of the Uyğur Empire, Bilge Kül Kadir Kagan is known to have taken the title of Kara Khan, Oguz Khan's father's name, and related himself to the A-shih-na [Kafesoğlu, IA Vol. 12/2:187].

As their letter to Caliph al-Qa'im may be taken to verify [Köymen, 1979:361], the Seljuks could not claim to be of venerable blood, A-shih-na or other. To be sure, as Sunni Muslims the Abbasid caliph legitimized their sovereignty, but as a Turkic clan they appear to have been well aware of the role fictitious genealogies played in this context. In both Rashid al-Din's and Bahadır Khan's versions of the *Oğuz-Nama*, not to mention Yazıcıoğlu's *Tarih-i al-i Selçuk* [Sümer, 1965:171], the Kınık are shown at the bottom of the list of Oguz lineages, in the service of the Yıva (Evya) [Togan, 1982:124-5]. In Mahmud of Kashgar's *Divanü Lügat-it-Türk*, they are shown at the top [Atalay, 1992/I:55ff]. Furthermore, in Rashid al-Din's version, Oguz Khan arrives through the Caspian Lowland, over the Volga (Atıl, İtil, Etil, or Edil), crossing the Caucasus from Derbend into the Mughan steppe, and returns through Demavend and Nishapur in Khurasan. This is thought to coincide with the legendary Afrasiyab's western campaign as depicted in Firdausi's (c.940-c.1020) *Shah-Nama* [Togan, 1982:123], a compendium of Pahlavi myth, legend and history originally presented to Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna [Ritter, IA Vol. 4:643-9]. The point being that Afrasiyab was considered to be Turkic [Togan, 1946:18-9, 108-10, 134-5, 167-8 & 174]; Mahmud of Kashgar unmistakably refers to him as *Alp Er Tonga* [Atalay, 1992/I:41], more correctly *Tonga Alper* [*Ibid.* III:368], and Yusuf Has Hajib idealizes Tonga Alper as a model leader [Dilâçar, 1988]. The Ferghana and Vienna manuscripts of the *Oğuz-Nama* confirm that the Karakhanids also claimed to have descended from Tonga Alper. A similar rumour came into being concerning the Seljuks, which they are known to have appropriated [Mansuroğlu, IA Vol. 4:192-3].

Rather than being the fundamental principle of Turkic succession as İnalcık concluded [1993b:41], divine favour was used similarly – to assert seniority of descent. For

instance, the title of the Hsiung-nu ruler was *Cheng-li Kutu Shan-yü*, which is thought to translate as *Tengri Kutu Shan-yü* [Roux, 1994:134], or Shan-yü, the Celestial Supreme Being's felicity. Tengri is the oldest word identified as Altaic [*Ibid.* 91]. The origins of the Hsiung-nu ruling lineage are not known, but the founding members of the Kök Türk A-shih-na are thought to have been shamans [İnan, 1995:4]. Of their two legends of lupine origin [Taşağıl, 1995:11-2; also Divitçioğlu, 1987:72-3], one clearly reflects a shamanistic character [İnan, 1995:160-5]. The other, however, refers to their prowess as smiths. Before Bumin Kagan founded their empire, the Kök Türk were the Juan-Juan's ironsmiths [Taşağıl, 1995:17]. The smith's craft is accepted as being second only to the shaman's vocation, namely that of leaving his or her body during a self-induced trance to ascend to the Heavens or descend into the Earth [Divitçioğlu, 1987:83ff; see also Roux, 1994:49-51 & 64-5 and M. Eliade, 1989:5 & 470ff]. This is of some importance because shamans are not known to have represented the Celestial Supreme Being [*Ibid.* 87], most likely because they did not believe in one [İnan, 1995:27-8]. The reason for this must be sought in current consensus according to which shamanism spread among Turkic people long after the establishment of their belief in a Celestial Supreme Being [*Ibid.* 1; see also Ocak, 1983:33-6]. Not surprisingly, a divine mandate is thought to have precluded a shaman from rising to the Heavens and eclipsing his or her ruler [Roux, 1994:53 & 118]. Thus possibly sovereignty was legitimized among the Kök Türk as under the Hsiung-nu, through kut rather than trance. As recorded on the Orkhun stone inscriptions, Kök Tengri pulls Kül Tekin's parents by their hair to the Heavens where the Türk sacred lands and water are in order. Arguably the ritual strangulation of Kök Türk kagans during inauguration merely emphasizes the point, because it was not self-induced as in the case of a shamanistic trance.

Certainly, as İnalçık pointed out [1993b:41; see Atalay, 1992/IV:388], Mahmud of Kashgar defined kut as *uğur* (good luck or omen, also auspiciousness), *devlet* (state or government, also prosperity, success or good luck), *bahı* (destiny or fortune), *talih* (good fortune) and *saadet* (happiness, also prosperity). On the other hand, although deemed essential for life [İnan, 1995:37], kut could be transmitted, visited, or gifted, not to mention that one who was in receipt of it could be disapproved of in light of his actions [Roux, 1994:31 & 131-4; also Divitçioğlu, 1987:59; see Atalay, 1992/I:92 and Tekin, 1988:17 & 51]. Arguably this is very much in keeping with the alternative meanings of Ogur, or *the clans*, namely to split a bone (also nation, as in *Ak* and *Kara Kamag Budun*) and felicity/statecraft. In short, kut was not a divine right. The expectation that divine favour must be renewed is indicated in Turkic accession rituals from at least as early as the Tabgaç (T'o-pa) or Wei dynasty (386-534). Their emperor was seated on the ground while being told of the virtues expected of him and of the harmony anticipated between the Heavens and the Earth. Subsequently, the high officials raised both the emperor and empress several times [*Ibid.* 118]. Nor did it have a fatalistic implication as Kafesoğlu and in particular İnalçık suggested. According to the latter, any human attempt to regulate succession was considered to have been in vain given the magico-religious source of sovereignty [1993b:43]. Instead, kut is best defined as a life force, which having been divinely gifted, could be renewed as well as ruined [Roux, 1994:132, 133 & 207; also İnan, 1995:37]. Not surprisingly, kut may have originally denoted *victorious strength* or *the light of victory* as in the Indo-Iranian *hvarnah* [*Ibid.* 134], that is a celebration of victory rather than a justification of the pursuit of power, hence its association with statecraft.

Whether they were senior by blood, age or indeed ability (merit), royal claimants who did not gain the support of the majority of those who enabled dominion failed to gain sovereignty. Among the Kōk Türk's ancestors, the Hsiung-nu, the Luan-ti was the ruling if not sacred lineage. Unlike the Kōk Türk A-shih-na lineage, however, who as far as can be determined married the daughters of the A-sheh-tê, the Luan-ti married the daughters of at least three other lineages, namely the Hsü-pu, Hu-yen and Lan. Until 59 BCE succession among the Hsiung-nu was from father to son, or, in 'unusual situations' such as that of an infant shan-yü, from elder to younger brother. After the interregnum, succession was from younger to elder brother [Barfield, 1989:41-2 & Divitçioğlu, 1987:168 & 192-8].<sup>39</sup> The point being that since at least the heads of these 'imperial' lineages were a part of the council, the Hsiung-nu succession, whatever the underlying principle, was the more stable because more clans had a vested interest. Moreover, as both the Hsiung-nu shan-yüs and the Kōk Türk kagans, great or small, consulted with their councils throughout their reigns, decisions taken by the former may have had a comparatively better chance of being upheld.

Like the Kōk Türk council (*kengeş*), doubtless the Oguz council (*kengeş*) had a say in who became yabgu and in his subsequent decisions. Besides Dukak's legendary altercation, according to Ibn Fadlan [see Şeşen, 1975:30], decisions among the Oguz were taken on a consultative basis. Although it is known that the Seljuks also held councils, there is no

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<sup>39</sup> This dichotomy is reflected also in the Kōk Türk legends of origin. In the one that emphasizes their prowess as smiths the eldest son becomes ruler, while in the one that emphasizes their shamanistic powers the youngest becomes ruler through personal merit [Taşağıl, 1995:11-2; also Divitçioğlu, 1987:72-3]. Although this may indicate the Hsiung-nu origins of one branch of the ruling A-shih-na lineage [see Sinor, 1994:287-91], it does not follow, as for instance Beckwith argued, that because the Greek *Arsilas* from the Turkic Arslan "undoubtedly" equates to A-shih-na they were of Tocharian origin on the female side as "the habitat of the lion did not extend as far north as Central Asia, let alone Siberia" [1987:206-8]. As Eberhard made clear, lions were well known in China before the Common Era as imports or gifts from present day Iran and Afghanistan [Köprülü, 1A Vol. 1:598-609]. Since the Turkic Arslan most likely stems from *arsl*, *Arsilan* and hence *Arsilas* may well be from Turkic and not Tocharian.

evidence that affiliated 'Türkmen begs were included in the apportionment of their dominion after Dandankan, let alone when Sultan Alp-Arslan and Malik-Shah apportioned the Great Seljuk Empire among the family. Perhaps not surprisingly, rather than a kengeş the Seljuks were better known for their toys, the feast held at a kengeş. But this custom also appears to have been relaxed under Sultan Malik-Shah.

Most likely this was because the Seljuks conquered the Middle East without the main body of Oguz. As far as can be determined, Selçuk Beg was a breakaway chieftain of the Kınık. After his death, when Arslan Yabgu was imprisoned, the latter's affiliates refused to recognise Selçuk Beg's remaining sons and struck out on their own. Possibly Kutalmış and Ibrahim Yinal also acted independently, since there is no mention of them when Musa, Tuğrul and Çağrı Begs' affiliates were massacred by Shah-Malik. Ibrahim Yinal seems to have joined the Seljuks after they entered Khurasan. Kutalmış does not receive mention until after Dandankan. Along with Ibrahim Yinal, those who joined the Seljuks in Khurasan appear like them to have been breakaway kin groups of Oguz descent. With the establishment of the Great Seljuk Empire, Iranian administrators and mamluk soldiery further diluted the Seljuks' following. The Iranians retained their local affiliations, but unlike the 'Türkmen the mamluks did not even have immediate kin except for some wives and children.

Right from the outset the administrators of the Great Seljuk Empire attempted to determine who acceded to the throne. There is the case of Sultan Tuğrul's Khwarazmian wife Altuncan Khatun's son Anushirvan. Kunduri is known to have tried to put him in the sultan's place while Ibrahim Yinal besieged the latter in Hamadan (1058-9). The failure of these attempts was not totally due to Kunduri's personal shortcomings and go beyond a lack of support from the soldiery, either mamluk or

Türkmen. Kunduri is referred to as Sultan Tuğrul's vizier, but the sultan is said to have consulted his wife in matters of state not Kunduri, who merely offered counsel [Köymen, 1976:72]. Consequently, as his first letter to Alp-Arslan also may be taken to testify, it is doubtful he headed an administration that encompassed the whole of the empire.

Certainly, Çağrı Beg and his sons appear to have acted independently, as did Sultan Tuğrul and his affiliates. When so requested they came to each other's aid. While Tuğrul Beg helped Çağrı Beg in Khwarazm, Kavurt and Alp-Arslan joined Sultan Tuğrul and Yakuti to defeat Ibrahim Yinal. Kara-Arslan Kavurt was assigned Kirman and Kuhistan (1048) [Merçil, 1980:21]. Subsequently Balkh, Tocharistan and Tirmiz were assigned to Alp-Arslan, with his father's vizier Shadan (1058) [Köymen, 1972:5]. However, Alp-Arslan is reputed to have been victorious in action against the Ghaznavids well before, when only 14 or 15 years old (1043-4) [*Ibid.* 4]. He is said to have taken command due to his father's illness, from which Çağrı Beg appears to have recovered when he learnt of his son's success. Most likely the story was based on Alp-Arslan's much later victory over Sultan Mawdud's son Mas'ud's forces (1057). Clearly Alp-Arslan's martial energy was regarded favourably by the military. Erdem, one of Süleyman's mamluk commanders, and others defected to Alp-Arslan after he was designated heir apparent. Nor must Alp-Arslan's resolve be underestimated. He journeyed from Balkh to Nishapur (1063), only to have to return when he learnt that instead of being dead as rumoured Sultan Tuğrul had been ill and was in Rayy [*Ibid.* 10].

Not surprisingly it was Alp-Arslan not Kavurt who received Kunduri's allegiance when the vizier failed to deal with Kutalmış. Kavurt is known to have advanced as far as Isfahan at the time. Having lost the throne and subsequently also Fars, which the sultan

returned to the Shebankarids, Kavurt is said to have opted for independence [Köymen, 1963:65-8]. True as this may be, as some of Sultan Alp-Arslan's commanders' change of heart indicates, at least subsequently he seems to have been encouraged to challenge his younger brother. The military also supported him when he challenged Malik-Shah. Unlike Kunduri, however, Nizam al-Mulk was in a better position because the only soldieries that appear to have needed encouragement – financial or other – were those garrisoned in the capital Rayy and of course the Türkmén toward Hamadan.

Even if at the beginning the Seljuks' administrative servants were unable to determine who acceded, by the end of Sultan Alp-Arslan's reign they appear to have become at least as important as the Seljuk military was. Arguably this was due to the Great Seljuk Empire having been united by Sultan Alp-Arslan, with the exception of Kirman, which seems to have enabled Nizam al-Mulk to place his numerous sons, sons-in-law and no doubt others worthy of his trust in administrative positions. Clearly this created contention between the men of the sword and those of the pen, which isolated Nizam al-Mulk. Worse still for his dependants in power throughout the empire, Nizam al-Mulk had made an enemy of Türkan Khatun by insisting on seniority in age rather than blood for the heir apparent. Although this seems to have been the norm in Islamdom, it went against Turkic ideology, according to which Turkic khatuns were expected to rule as and when necessary.

Consequently, at the time of the vizier's assassination and the sultan's death, which occurred soon afterwards, not only was the administration at odds with the military but also with the Seljuks. This deprived Great Seljuk succession of consensus at a critical conjuncture, when the Abbasid Caliphate's legitimacy had been challenged by the demand that a Seljukid become the next caliph. Particularly as Nizam al-Mulk's renown



among the indigenous urban populations made his legacy an even broader based force to be reckoned with.

### ***7.10 The Power Struggle***

Rather than the indeterminacy of Turkic succession or personal ambition and greed, which Turkish scholars attribute to Tūrkan Khatun in particular, it was arguably the rift between the military and the administration that started the interregnum and continued to fuel it.

Given the support of the royal mamluk corps, Tūrkan Khatun's dealings with the caliph may have secured her regency until her son was of age, despite Nizam al-Mulk's sons and dependants, whom there had not been time to displace or distance from their local power bases. Although it was the caliph who is said to have stipulated that Üner was appointed Commander-in-Chief under Taj al-Mulk, it seems that Tūrkan Khatun may have attempted to impose on the Great Seljuk Empire not only her vizier but also the commander of her mamluk soldiery. This may explain the vast sum she is said to have spent in accession money. As some of the commanders defected to Berk-Yaruk at Burujird, however, she does not seem to have been successful in gaining the allegiance of the royal corps, splitting it in the process.

It is all the more important, therefore, that the Türkmen between Hamadan and Rayy who gained 500,000 dinars and 5,000 chainmail suits during Malik-Shah and Kavurt's struggle for the throne receive no mention in this context. References to Inanç Yabgu and Bilge Beg suggest those that had not migrated to Anatolia had been resettled on iqta's, as Turkish scholars have proposed. Whatever the case, at the time of Sultan

Malik-Shah's death, the Türkmén seem to have been too thinly spread to be a decisive force even on a regional basis, that is, except in Anatolia. This seems to be supported by their known Seljukid affiliations during the period in question. There is Çağrı Beg's remaining son Arslan-Argun in Khwarazm and Khurasan, Sultan Alp-Arslan's remaining son Böri-Pars in present day Afghanistan, Çağrı Beg's grandson Isma'il in Azarbayjan, Sultan Malik-Shah's brother Tutuş in Syria and south-eastern Anatolia, not to mention Berk-Yaruk and Muhammad Tapar.

Arslan-Argun seems to have been unable to take Nishapur with his Türkmén. It is only after he gained the support of the mamluk commanders in Marv that he took not only Nishapur but also Balkh and Tirmiz. Mamluk soldiery also supported Böri-Pars and his vizier Imad al-Mulk. In any event, Arslan-Argun appears to have been content to revert the Great Seljuk Empire to bipartite rule as in his father's time. Although Böri-Pars can be argued to have supported a unified empire, given that he retired to Herat as soon as he had defeated his uncle, he can not have been too concerned with the state of affairs in Iraq either. In other words, even if there were a good number of Türkmén in Khurasan and Khwarazm, these were not united when Arslan-Argun retook Marv and went on to defeat Böri-Pars and imprison him.

As for Azarbayjan and Arran, given that Türkan Khatun sent her commander Kür-Boğa to support Isma'il with mamluk soldiery, there could not have been that many Türkmén there. Although Tutuş is known to have advanced on Iraq al-Ajam through eastern Anatolia and Azarbayjan, on the first attempt he was forced to withdraw when Aksungur and Bozan defected to Berk-Yaruk. On his second and last attempt he also waited for Türkan Khatun's mamluk soldiery.

Finally, even though Berk-Yaruk had the support of the Türkmen in Iraq al-Arab, Muhammad Tapar defeated him. During their subsequent confrontations Muhammad Tapar seems to have tried to rally those Türkmen in Azarbayjan and Arran to his side, but to little effect.

Since the Türkmen appear to have been dispersed if not disinterested and the Nizamiyya only a thousand or so strong, the question arises if the 46,000-strong royal mamluk corps was billeted in Isfahan as seems to have been assumed? According to Kafesoğlu [1953:156-9; also Özeydin, 2001:209-10 & Lambton, 1980/X:372], who based his view on the *Siyasat-Nama*, mamluk commanders were assigned iqta's that were dispersed throughout the empire to facilitate the procurement of supplies and payment while on campaign. More likely, however, this applied only to those who served in the palace under the Hajib-i Buzurg, the sultan's chief of staff and hence the most senior member of the Great Seljuk Empire after the sultan and the vizier.

As chief of staff the Hajib-i Buzurg was not only responsible for the commanders (hajib or ağacı) who received correspondence from notables of the realm, relaying the sultan's orders verbally to the vizier, but also in charge of the palace. Of the commanders who reported to him on this basis the Jandar was responsible for the security of the palace; the Silahdar looked after the palace arsenal and the sultan's weapons, which he carried for him; the Alam took care of the sultan's banners; the Ahur tended to the sultan's horses; the Tashtdar supplied the palace's ewers and bowls; the Jamedar was responsible for royal and ceremonial robes; the Sharabdar procured the sultan's medicines and stocked the palace cellar; the Chashnigir oversaw the sultan's table and royal banquets. As for the remaining palace posts not filled by the military, in

time these seem to have lost their former status except for the sultan's personal secretary [Özaydın, 2001:202-7].

What seems clear from the above is that with exception of the Hajib-i Buzurg, his staff and the Amir-i Jandar, the commanders in the palace were involved in the procurement of supplies. Since of these the Tashtdar is known to have been granted a part of the income from Khwarazm as remuneration from which he supplied the palace with ewers and bowls, it may be assumed that the other chamberlains had similar arrangements. Nor must it be forgotten that it seems all the commanders serving in the palace had mamluk soldieries to train and equip. As references to various Amir-i Ahur such as Inanç Yabgu in Hamadan indicate, however, having proved their worth, the majority were assigned to police regions taxed directly. In such cases most likely their soldieries came to be supported by local iqta's since they would have been garrisoned in the urban centres where the civil administrators presided. It follows, therefore, that their previous grants may have been re-assigned to their replacements, in effect the commanders of the royal mamluk corps billeted in Isfahan. To be sure, there were also commanders who either accompanied the sultan on campaign or were assigned to campaigns on their own, such as Artuk, Aksungur, Yağ-Sıyan, Porsuk and Bozan. The first three were Turkic begs and can be assumed to have resided on their iqta's, as the Porsuks seem to have in the environs of Hamadan. Nevertheless, while on campaign, each would have benefited from the provisions stockpiled for this purpose on crown lands.

All this suggests that the royal corps was considerably less than 46,000 and that contrary to Kafesoğlu this number was possibly the total of so-called mamluk soldiery garrisoned on or in the vicinity of the iqta's granted to their commanders for their upkeep. Certainly, within three years of Sultan Malik-Shah's death, Muayyad al-Mulk is

credited with sending word throughout the empire and gathering a 30,000-strong force with which Sultan Berk-Yaruk defeated Tutuṣ. Within another three years there are reports of commanders being dispatched by Sultan Berk-Yaruk to take control of iqtaʿs from those that had displeased him. Habashi was sent to reclaim Khwarazm from Kavdan and Yaruk-Taş who had killed its commander Ekinci whilst in Marv.

When taken in conjunction with Kür-Boğa's unilateral inclusion of Mosul in the Great Seljuk Empire, Kavdan and Yaruk-Taş's attempt to establish themselves in Khwarazm can be interpreted as a scramble for iqtaʿs by commanders of the royal corps (1096-7), but there is little evidence for this. Although Sultan Berk-Yaruk is said to have pardoned Kavdan and Yaruk-Taş on Arslan-Argun's death, they are thought to have felt their positions to be not secure after the assignment of Khurasan to Sancar. Whatever their motivation, Kavdan's soldiery did not support their commander's actions and rebelled when Yaruk-Taş captured Habashi. As for Kür-Boğa, who was Tūrkan Khatun's Commander-in-Chief Üner's son-in-law, he seems to have been one of her mamluks. Possibly this is also why Sultan Berk-Yaruk assigned Fars to Üner on Tutuṣ's death. In both their cases, the problem appears to have been one of ensuring a commensurate position after their Seljukid mentors had lost the struggle to assert their sovereignty.

Arguably, therefore, it was Sultan Malik-Shah's soldiery, those with him on route to Baghdad and those left behind to guard the capital Isfahan, which were divided at Burujird. Apart from the so-called mamluk commanders and their soldiery throughout the Great Seljuk Empire, Tūrkan Khatun, Tutuṣ, Ismaʿil, Arslan-Argun and even Nizam al-Mulk all had their own forces. This may go a long way toward explaining the role the latter's soldiery is thought to have played in securing Berk-Yaruk's release and defeating Taj al-Mulk at Burujird. It seems all the more remarkable, therefore, that Berk-Yaruk

attempted to appoint 'Taj al-Mulk his vizier. This is not to deny that the young prince appears to have seriously misjudged the Nizamiyya's allegiance and possibly that of the local populace. Tutuş was dissuaded from having Fakhr al-Mulk killed for the latter reason. Although Turkish scholars criticise Tutuş for having been unnecessarily harsh on questions of personal allegiance [Köymen, 1963:76; Özaydın, 2001:45], both his and Berk-Yaruk's desire to be rid of Nizam al-Mulk's sons and dependants may point to how deep-seated the Seljuks' suspicion of Nizam al-Mulk's patronage had become.

In general Turkish scholars present Sultan Malik-Shah's reported accusation that Nizam al-Mulk considered himself a partner to his dominion, which the vizier confirmed by stating that one could not exist without the other, as having been fanned by those who were either jealous of his power or thwarted by him [Turan, 1965:169-73; Kafesoğlu, 1953:196-203; Özaydın, 2001:1-12]. However, as Köymen put it [1963:71-2], most likely the underlying reason was that Sultan Malik-Shah had become intent on giving his government a Turkic character, which Nizam al-Mulk's patronage impeded. The dispute between the vizier's son Osman al-Mulk and the sultan's commander Kavdan, respectively the amid and the shihna for Marv, which is said to have finally caused the sultan to reproach Nizam al-Mulk prior to his assassination, lends support to this view.

The argument being that as the Seljuks' warrior élite the commanders not only saw themselves as the governors of the empire rather than its police, but were also perceived as such at least by Sultan Malik-Shah. Most notably Bozan, Aksungur and Yağı-Sıyan were appointed to administer rather than to police. The latter two were Türkmen begs rather than mamluks. In other words, as was prevalent on the steppe the Seljuks appear to have regarded the military as part of the executive, not subordinate to a sedentary administration.

If the warrior élite were spread throughout the empire, however, then besides the fealty of the regional commanders the key to dominion would have been the sultan's royal mamluk corps. Arguably this is borne out by events in that the regional commanders' standing seems to have been strengthened by Berk-Yaruk's first two encounters in the field, which even if not expending the royal corps must have diminished it substantially. The situation appears to have become acute for Berk-Yaruk after his battle with Isma'îl. Although Üner and the commanders in Isfahan refused Tutuş's invitation to join, despite Türkan Khatun's intention for them to do so prior to her death, Berk-Yaruk needed the regional commanders to finally defeat his uncle. Having thus become key to Seljukid dominion, it is not surprising that they resisted 'strongly centralist' viziers who would have wanted to revert to a civil administration supported by a central force financed from direct taxation. This is the reason proposed for Berk-Yaruk's commanders' petition for al-Balasani to be handed over to them in return for their allegiance while Muhammad 'Tapar advanced with Mu'ayyad al-Mulk, whom in effect al-Balasani had replaced [*Ibid.* 154-9; see also Köymen, 1963:79].

Isolated by his commanders who murdered al-Balasani despite his refusal, Berk-Yaruk seems to have used among others the Isma'îlis as and when possible [*Ibid.* 92]. What must not be overlooked, however, is that batini beliefs may already have made strong inroads among the Türkmén. In his first battle with Muhammad 'Tapar numerous Türkmén are said to have given Berk-Yaruk their support. In their second encounter (April 1101), Berk-Yaruk seems to have had a large contingent of infantry, which suggests the involvement of citizen soldiers (*jund*). Soon afterwards Sultan Berk-Yaruk led the massacre of 300 Isma'îlis (June 1101), plundering their tents and baggage train, their commander Muhammad Düşmenziyar being caught and killed the next day.

Although this suggests the said Ismaʿilis were soldiers, it is not clear whether or not they had been supporting the sultan. The massacre is said to have taken place because Berk-Yaruk's commanders complained that even on the field Muhammad Tapar's men taunted them with being Ismaʿilis [*Ibid.* 89], which suggests that at the very least they had infiltrated their forces [Hillenbrand, 2001:208]. There is also the report that earlier in Khurasan 5,000 Ismaʿilis fought with Habashi and hence presumably when Sancar defeated him and Berk-Yaruk.

The warfare lasted for eight years before it began to abate (1092-1100), a period that is coincident with the rise in batini activity. To be sure, the Ismaʿilis terrorized notables throughout the Great Seljuk Empire by highly public assassinations, but the year before the killings peaked they also took the citadels of Girdkuh and Shahdiz near Damghan and Isfahan respectively (1096) [*Ibid.* 206]. The latter citadel was of considerable importance as besides its proximity to the capital it controlled the road to Khurasan. To these must be added the various fortifications in Dailam, where for instance Ghutinar appears to have been visible from Alamut, Lamasar and Maymündiz [*Ibid.* 215], as well as those in Kuhistan, Khurasan and Syria, all of which seem to have exerted control over their immediate environs.

Finally, five of the first six battles between Berk-Yaruk and the forces of his challengers, namely those with Taj al-Mulk, Ismaʿil, Tutuş and Muhammad Tapar, which all took place in Iraq al-Ajam, seem to have been quite bloody. While Tutuş's advances are said to have been especially disruptive, the continual warfare doubtless devastated not only Iraq al-Ajam but also al-Arab. Quite apart from Berk-Yaruk who twice pillaged the Sawad, there was incessant fighting in and around Mosul, too, not to mention Syria and



Palestine. Here 'Tutuş's sons Ridwan and Dukak seem to have fought each other to a standstill prior to the arrival of the Crusaders.

Given the regional commanders' resistance to central taxation, it is not surprising that Berk-Yaruk ran out of funds if not earlier than then certainly towards the end of 1099. With both the Public and Private Treasury in Tūrkan Khatun's possession he seems to have been hard pressed from the beginning when he accepted 500,000 dinars for ceding Isfahan to her son Mahmud. Nevertheless, reports of his pillaging the caliph's estates near Wasit and demands of back taxes from the caliph's vizier begin in 1100. Soon afterwards there is the plundering of Baghdad, despite an infusion of 50,000 dinars from the caliph, and the demand for one million dinars in back taxes from the ruler of Hilla, Sayf al-Dawla Sadaqa. That same year the commanders imposed their first agreement on Muhammad Tapar and Berk-Yaruk (1101), wherein they also stipulated how much tax Muhammad Tapar would pay into the Public Treasury. Muhammad Tapar seems to have been equally short of funds, likewise confiscating 250,000 dinars from the caliph's vizier, not to mention 20,000 dinars from the inhabitants of Rayy. Be that as it may, the second and final agreement clearly underlined the regional commanders' independence, confirming as it did that they could change sides whenever they wanted.

In short, given the rift between the men of the sword and those of the pen, it seems clear that in the absence of an ongoing campaign no one Seljukid had a sufficiently large force with which to ensure sovereign power upon Sultan Malik-Shah's unexpected death.

### 7.11 *The Question of Common Ownership*

It is true that when the older sons of a patriarch left the family hearth and set up with their families they continued to share water and pasturage. But only so long as they remained in the patriarch's camp. The point being that if the camp was overpopulated or became so during the father's lifetime, or indeed the eldest or another son decided to strike out on his own, then he and his affiliates shared grazing rights according to *their* position in the tribe, which was *below* his father's. As has been discussed, unlike among agriculturists nomadic pastoral grazing rights and hence migration routes and schedules were not absolute but *usufruct*. Moreover, when an elder son left the hearth he took his inheritance with him, so that if the father was richer when the next son left then at least initially he was better off than his older brother was.

Consequently, while the eldest son can be expected to have gained his father's position on the latter's death if of the right mother, it does not follow that challenges arose because of common ownership as Turkish scholars have proposed, with or without reference to Turkic succession. Arguably once each had their own realm members felt free to improve their respective positions. Although possibly preferable for the polity, this did not have to be at the expense of someone outside those affiliated through descent or by kinship.

After Dandankan Çağrı Beg retained Khurasan while Musa Yabgu and presumably his sons were assigned to the conquest of Herat and Sistan. Tuğrul Beg took upon himself the conquest of Iraq al-Ajam from Nishapur with Ibrahim Yinal and Kutalmış who were from the remaining two branches of the family. It is not clear what happened to Musa Yabgu's sons Hasan, Yusuf and Böri of whom one may have rebelled in Herat on Sultan Alp-Arslan's accession. Since Herat was assigned to Sultan Alp-Arslan's son

Togan-Shah, however, they may have died without heirs. Çağrı Beg appears to have retained Alp-Arslan with his other sons Ilyas and Osman, that is, if the latter two were still alive, assigning the eldest Kavurt to the conquest of Kirman where he and his descendants remained. Çağrı Beg's remaining son Yakuti (Alp-Sungur) later joined Tuğrul Beg who assigned him to the conquest of Azarbayjan where he and his descendants also remained.

Tuğrul Beg clearly was reluctant to allow either Ibrahim Yinal or Kutalmış to gain a foothold in Jibal and Jurjan, which they respectively conquered. Ibrahim Yinal rebelled twice. First when Tuğrul Beg took Hamadan and its environs from him and secondly after he had been assigned Mosul and its environs. Presumably he considered Mosul an inadequate reward for his undoubtedly invaluable services and seems to have decided that the only way to gain independence was to forcibly remove Sultan Tuğrul. Likewise his brother Er-Taş was not allowed to keep Sistan although he helped Musa Yabgu conquer it and returned to Khurasan where he died soon afterwards. His sons Muhammad and Ahmad joined their uncle, Ibrahim Yinal, during his second rebellion and were killed in the process. The third brother Er-Basgan migrated to Anatolia after having taken part in Kavurt's first rebellion, which rather than a challenge for the throne also seems to have been a bid for independence. Having been forced to seek refuge with the Byzantines at least for a time, Er-Basgan appears to have joined Süleyman-Shah who also migrated to Anatolia with his brothers on their father Kutalmış's demise.

Kutalmış and his brother Resul-Tekin are known to have rebelled of their own accord, as well as possibly supporting Ibrahim Yinal. Although they failed, Kutalmış's son Süleyman-Shah established an independent polity in Anatolia. What is not clear is whether or not Süleyman-Shah accepted Sultan Malik-Shah's suzerainty. When the

Great Seljuks' vassal, the Uqailid Muslim lost his life after Süleyman-Shah's occupation of Antakya, his descendants asked Sultan Malik-Shah whether to hand Aleppo to Süleyman-Shah or Tutuş. Not surprisingly he chose his brother and Süleyman-Shah lost his life over Aleppo, which neither had as yet entered. By comparison the city dignitaries in Mosul invited Süleyman-Shah's son Sultan Kılıç Arslan, not to mention Sultan Tapar's vassal Sayf al-Dawla Sadaqa and commander Porsukoğlu Aksungur. However they did so without informing Sultan Tapar, possibly because he had assigned Mosul to Çavlı Sakavu who had defeated and killed their governor, Çökürmüş, whom they appear to have liked. In any event, Çavlı defeated Kılıç Arslan who lost his life while in flight. Like his father before him, therefore, he can be said to have been trying to expand his domains at the expense of the Great Seljuks.

After Kavurt had lost his life challenging Sultan Malik-Shah's right to the throne, which he appears to have first claimed in writing on grounds that he was the eldest, his descendants ruled Kirman independently. The nature and scope of Sultan Malik-Shah's brother Tekiş's rebellions are not clear. Possibly like Arslan-Argun's during Sultan Berk-Yaruk's inconclusive reign, he merely wanted to gain a sustainable or larger dominion of his own in Khurasan, as his nephews had in Kirman and Anatolia.

As for Tutuş's sons Ridwan and Dukak, the so-called Seljuks of Syria, arguably they became isolated after their father lost his life in the attempt to gain the throne from his nephew Berk-Yaruk. They certainly appear to have accepted Sultan Berk-Yaruk's sovereignty even if their relationship to Sultan Tapar seems ambivalent. Clearly, however, Dukak wanted to be independent of Ridwan. When Ridwan was forced to accept this it seems that Dukak was quite happy to have his elder brother's name included in the khutba before his.

In comparison to his predecessors, Great Sultan Sancar did not unify the Great Seljuk Empire after he had challenged and defeated his nephew Sultan Mahmud. Instead he established the Seljuks of Iraq alongside those of Kirman and Anatolia. The sultans of Iraq, Mahmud and Mas'ud, clearly resented Great Sultan Sancar's suzerainty over their affairs, Mas'ud being forced to take the field against him while challenging Tuğrul's appointment as sultan. Nevertheless, the almost continual warfare between Sultan Tapar's descendants to become sultan of the Seljuks of Iraq was due to the ambitions of their commanders and the caliphs rather than a quest for independence. It seems that whenever they had matured sufficiently in age they tried but invariably failed to wrest control back from the commanders, one of whom always designated themselves their atabeg.

Last but not least, none of the Seljuks appear to have questioned the right of Seljukid descendants to inherit their father's domains. This included female descendants. Sultan Tapar's wife Gevher Khatun – who was Yakuti's son Isma'il's granddaughter – is said to have continued to be responsible for Azarbayjan after her father Mawdud's death. On her death, Sultan Mas'ud's wife, who as Sultan Berk-Yaruk's daughter was Yakuti's daughter Zubaydah Khatun's namesake and granddaughter, also seems to have had a say in who was appointed commander to Azarbayjan.

In sum, it seems clear that in the main contention between the Seljuks arose in the quest for independence from a senior member's rule – the tendency being the greater the less their familial affinity was. Challenges for the throne during the reign of an incumbent arose only when independence was not granted or ambition drove a member to try and expand his dominion, even if at the expense of another. Consequently contention cannot be said to have stemmed from the concept of common ownership.

## 8. CONCLUSION

'The Seljuks' and their affiliates' rude vigour appears to have influenced Muslim men of letters adversely, obscuring the more important aspects of their culture and their perceptions of Islamdom. A century and a half before Sultan Malik-Shah, Ibn Fadlan was embarrassed by an Oguz woman who scratched her private parts in his presence. Seeing his discomfort, her husband admonished him that better so than she cover herself in public and commit adultery in private [Şeşen, 1975:31]. Not surprisingly, when Caliph al-Muqtadi asked to marry Sultan Malik-Shah's daughter, Mah Melek Khatun, the chief jurist for Khwarazm charged with negotiating terms is said to have advised instead that the caliph did not take a 'coarse' Türkmen woman into his household. Nevertheless, the caliph had to agree to Sultan Malik-Shah's wife Türkän Khatun's terms. As a result it seems that he had to wait for his chief wife to die before he could wed Mah Melek Khatun. Although Muslim historians appear to credit Türkän Khatun rather than Sultan Malik-Shah with conducting negotiations, further references to Seljuk women seem incidental except for the interregnum in which Türkän Khatun also played a central role. Even so, these references suggest that *all* Seljuk women enjoyed considerable freedom and authority throughout the empire.

Sultan Tuğrul is said to have consulted with his wife in all matters of state. During Ibrahim Yinal's rebellion it was Altuncan Khatun who came to Sultan Tuğrul's aid while his vizier, Kunduri, attempted to put her son Anushirvan on the throne. As a result,

rather than Kunduri, it was Altuncan Khatun who fought off Ibrahim Yinal's advance units and enabled the sultan to withdraw to Rayy, where she joined him.

Little seems to be known about Sultan Alp-Arslan's wife, but it may be indicative that the Great Seljuks' vassal in Khuzistan is said to have saved his life by paying part of the taxes outstanding from Sultan Tuğrul's reign to Sultan Alp-Arslan's wife as well as Nizam al-Mulk.

Sultan Malik-Shah's wife, Tūrkan Khatun, had her own diwan and soldiery, and it was her vizier who replaced Nizam al-Mulk upon his assassination. When taken in conjunction with the marriage negotiations mentioned above, it seems clear that she played a similar role to that of Altuncan Khatun and Sultan Alp-Arslan's wife. Certainly, in his *Sīyasat-Nama*, Nizam al-Mulk counselled at length against allowing women a voice in affairs of state. Not surprisingly, Nizam al-Mulk's son, Mu'ayyad al-Mulk, may have had Sultan Berk-Yaruk's mother Zubaydah Khatun strangled because she also had say in the running of the empire.

Last but not least, Sultan Mahmud's wife likewise had her own vizier and, on her father Great Sultan Sancar's order, at one time stood surety for the Seljuks' Shi'ite vassal Dubays al-Sadaqa, whom the Abbasid caliph feared.

The argument is further strengthened in so far that Seljuk women seem to have had as much right to the empire as the men, although the latter ruled. Sultan Tapar may have had his wife Gevher Khatun killed on his death to prevent his brother from inheriting his realms by marrying her as was customary. Gevher Khatun was Yakuti's great granddaughter and as such directly responsible for Azarbayjan after her father Mawdud's death. On her death, Sultan Mas'ud's wife, who as Sultan Berk-Yaruk's

daughter was Yakuti's daughter Zubaydah Khatun's namesake and granddaughter, gained say in the running of Azarbayjan. Great Sultan Sancar's former commander Karasungur benefited from her patronage even though her husband had defeated and ousted him when he was Sultan Tuğrul's regent in Azarbayjan.

As with the Seljuk women, so with many of the events referred to by Muslim men of letters with regard to the Seljuks and their military. The Seljuks were of the Oguz. According to Ibn Fadlan, the Oguz Commander-in-Chief was chosen on merit, which was not interpreted solely in martial terms. He mentions another Oguz chieftain who although he had become a Muslim had to renounce because his affiliates disapproved. The Oguz conducted themselves in accordance with their customary laws. When disputes arose, a plaintiff nevertheless had say in the ruling passed by his chieftain. Not surprisingly, Ibn Fadlan observed that the Oguz took decisions in council.

There is little doubt that the Seljuks agreed in council on what action to take and on the relative standing of each of their members. Having defeated the Ghaznavid army based in Nishapur (1038), they apportioned Khurasan among themselves at a council where they chose Tuğrul Beg to be their leader. When Sultan Mas'ud personally took the field, the Seljuks held two councils at both of which Çağrı Beg is said to have prevailed (1039 & 1040). After Dandankan they once again apportioned Khurasan among their members and assigned others to conquer Iraq al-Ajam and Sistan. On succeeding to the throne and uniting the Great Seljuk Empire under his rule (1063), Sultan Alp-Arslan likewise appears to have apportioned the realms in his dominion among dynastic members (1065/6). Nevertheless, in view of the time lapse this may no longer have been a council in the full sense. There is no mention of one under Sultan Malik-Shah. Certainly the feast associated with such gatherings appears to have been dispensed with.



Sultan Malik-Shah is said to have affronted the Çiğil by not holding one whilst in Transoxania (1090).

Unlike tribal etiquette, however, the virtues associated with merit do not seem to have fallen by the wayside. When Kunduri declared Süleyman sultan, ostensibly in keeping with Sultan Tuğrul's will, some of the latter's commanders left to join Alp-Arslan and Kutalmış. Clearly they did not consider Süleyman merited the office of sultan. During Sultan Alp-Arslan's reign, many likewise came to favour Kara-Arslan Kavurt. As may be surmized also from their similar actions on Sultan Malik-Shah's accession, the commanders appear to have been opposed to the Irano-Islamic character that Nizam al-Mulk was endeavouring to give the Great Seljuk Empire.

Besides his views concerning 'meddlesome' women, in his renowned opus the vizier advised a heterogeneous military as had existed under Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna. Sultan Malik-Shah must have disappointed his atabeg when he expelled some Armenian mamluks on the objections of his Turkic commanders. Most likely these were from the captives Sultan Alp Arslan took in the Caucasus where he campaigned with Nizam al-Mulk and Malik-Shah immediately after succeeding to the throne. Sultan Malik-Shah clearly not only favoured a wholly Turkic military, but also replaced his vassals with either Türkmen begs or Turkic commanders rather than appointing Iranian administrators. This, too, was against his vizier's advice in the *Siyasat-Nama*, which recommended that because they had helped found the Great Seljuk Empire, a thousand youths from among the Türkmen should be rewarded with positions in the palace as mamluks.

With the exception of Artuk Beg, who disobeyed Fakhr al-Dawla Muhammad because the caliphs' former vizier was reluctant to attack his countrymen, the Türkmen begs,

namely Çubuk, Sabuk and Dilmaçoğlu, apportioned the Marwanids' realms they had been assigned by Sultan Malik-Shah to conquer. Fakhr al-Dawla Muhammad and his son were allowed to retain Silvan and Diyarbakır respectively, but during the interregnum Artuk Beg's sons returned to Diyarbakır and established their own dynasty (1101-1231).

There are also Sultan Malik-Shah's assignments of Yağı-Sıyan, Aksungur and Bozan respectively as the governors general of Antakya, Aleppo and Urfa. Yağı-Sıyan and Aksungur likewise were Türkmen begs. Bozan conquered Urfa, but the sultan personally took Aleppo from the Uqailids and Antakya from the Seljuks of Anatolia. Not surprisingly, it was Sultan Malik-Shah who sent Türkan Khatun's vizier Taj al-Mulk to reprimand Nizam al-Mulk because his son Osman, the governor of Marv, had publicly upbraided its commander. The vizier had responded haughtily that the sultan could not do without him, but he was assassinated soon afterwards.

Rather than as Turkish scholars maintained, therefore, the interregnum can not be said to have been lengthened by the commanders' greed and ambition though doubtless this played a part. To the contrary, arguably they completed the re-Turkification of the empire that Köymen thought was Sultan Malik-Shah's policy, that is, despite Sultan Berk-Yaruk, whom they had supported against Tutuş. Clearly Tutuş was not held in high esteem by either the Türkmen begs in south-eastern Anatolia or Sultan Malik-Shah's governors general. Both deserted him at the first opportunity. As with Sultan Alp-Arslan, however, the issue in question with respect to Sultan Berk-Yaruk was not one of martial merit but governance. It is clear from Ibn Fadlan's travelogue that apart from being elected to offices such as Commander-in-Chief and Chief Counsellor, the heads of the Oguz lineages made rulings in accordance with customary law.

Consequently, there can be no doubt that military, administrative and judicial functions among the Oguz were combined. Whether or not Sultan Berk-Yaruk's counsellor, al-Balasani, had the commander Porsuk assassinated by batinis, arguably the Turkic commanders refused to become subordinate to a central administration that most likely would have attempted to re-impose civil authority.

What must not be overlooked in any discussion of their role is that the commanders resided on their *iqta's*, which as Turan maintained became hereditary grants where feasible. When Porsukoğlu Aksungur was killed by Isma'ili assassins, Sultan Mahmud left Mosul and its environs in Aksungur's son Mas'ud's hands. On his death the following year, Aksungur's commander Çavlı, who had been governing Mosul as his regent, sent an envoy requesting to be confirmed in Mas'ud's son's name. The envoy seems to have suggested Zengi instead, to which Sultan Mahmud is said to have agreed.

To be sure, the forces gathered from the regions by Sultan Berk-Yaruk to defeat Tutuş, not to mention subsequent reports concerning the dispersal of Sultan Tapar's armies at harvest time, suggest that residence became the norm during the interregnum. Nonetheless, it may have been the case from the outset. Quite apart from Tuğrul Beg's promise of land to the Ghaznavid mamluk commanders who secured victory for the Seljuks at Dandankan, there is his alleged grant of the caliph's *iqta's* to his Türkmen. Although there appear to be no such references as concerns Sultan Alp-Arslan, during Sultan Malik-Shah's reign commanders are known to have had viziers. Taj al-Mulk first served under Sav-Tekin. Although Sav-Tekin is not credited with being a governor general, there is mention of the vizier for the commander who was governor general of Fars. Sultan Malik-Shah appears to have been grooming him to take over from Nizam al-Mulk, before the latter's son had him blinded. Possibly, therefore, the Buyids' *iqta' al-*

*istighlal* applied solely to chamberlains, such as Sultan Malik-Shah's Tashtdar who was remunerated from Khwarazm.

Neither Sultan Tapar nor Great Sultan Sancar appear to have attempted to re-impose a centralized civil administration, as seems to have prevailed under Sultan Alp-Arslan. As was the case at the outset under Tuğrul and Çağrı Beg, the Great Seljuks apportioned their realm among their members and adhered to seniority in their choice of sovereign. Although Great Sultan Sancar defeated the lesser sultans Mahmud and Mas'ud, he did not replace them with their youngest brother, Tuğrul, whom he is said to have favoured, or put Iraq under his direct rule. When Sultan Mahmud failed to divest the caliph of his military as instructed, the Great Sultan appears to have detained him in Rayy for the best part of a year. Likewise, although he spent nearly a year in Samarkand, Great Sultan Sancar did not incorporate the Karakhanid realms into the Great Seljuk Empire either. He defeated the Khwarazmshah Atsız several times, but when his nephew Süleyman proved unable to take control of the region, also allowed Atsız to remain in place. It is noteworthy that none of this seems to have prevented Great Sultan Sancar from mobilizing the large forces he regularly took on campaign, or from maintaining peace and prosperity in Khurasan, which was under his direct dominion.

As for the isolation of the Seljuks of Syria and later those of Iraq, arguably this was as much due to Sultan Tapar and Great Sultan Sancar's apparent refusal to see their cousins' and nephews' weaknesses. Certainly, neither Ridwan nor Dukak seem to have had the resources to defeat the Crusaders' attempts to expand into Syria. Both required the support of Sultan Tapar. Insufficient resources may also have been the underlying cause for the loss of the Caucasus and Lower Mesopotamia by the Seljuks of Iraq. Even if so, however, both Tutuş's and Sultan Tapar's descendants can not be said to

have demonstrated merit as warriors. In sharp contrast to their fathers and forefathers, they appear to have preferred their soldieries to do the fighting for them. Unable to gain the fealty of their commanders, in time they became little more than their atabegs' sources of legitimacy and prestige.

Despite being ruled by a martial meritocracy akin to that of the Oguz, the Great Seljuk Empire remained Islamic in judicial practice and taxation simply because their subjects were Muslims. The question of legitimacy, however, is more ambivalent. In releasing Caliph al-Qa'im from imprisonment by the Shi'ite Arslan al-Basasiri, Tuğrul Beg was able to use the Abbasids' claim to the leadership of the Muslim community, as the Prophet Muhammad's successors, to legitimize Seljuk hegemony first in Khurasan and then also in Iraq. In the process he is argued to have made sure the caliph rescinded all claims to political power by being invested *the Ruler of the East and the West*. Even if so, the caliphs could not have given up hope of regaining temporal power. Certainly, Caliph al-Muqtadi appears to have attempted this on Sultan Tuğrul's death. Possibly this is why Sultan Alp-Arslan never journeyed to Baghdad, going so far as to marry his daughter to the caliph's son in Nishapur. Sultan Malik-Shah visited Baghdad to attend the marriage of his daughter to the caliph. When Sultan Malik-Shah next visited Baghdad, it was to oust the caliph for refusing to declare his son from Mah-Melek Khatun heir apparent. Most likely, therefore, the caliph had him poisoned. During the interregnum Sultan Berk-Yaruk pillaged the caliph's iqta's and held his vizier to ransom, ostensibly for back taxes. Likewise Sultan Tapar imprisoned the caliph's vizier and confiscated his removable wealth. After the interregnum, the strained relationship between the Seljuks and the Abbasids deteriorated such that caliphs al-Mustarshid and al-Rashid lost their lives whilst being held captive by the Seljuks.

There is also the matter of the Seljuks' zeal as Muslim converts to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence to consider. This seems exaggerated to say the least. Sultan Tuğrul allowed his vizier, who was a Mu'tazili, to anathematise the Hanafi and Shafi'i schools of jurisprudence before he gave in to objections and countermanded the imprisonment and exile of some 400 juriconsults and jurists. Sultan Alp-Arslan and Malik-Shah do not appear to have been concerned by Nizam al-Mulk's patronage of Shafi'i juriconsults either. Nor can they be said to have pursued the Isma'ilis after the renowned vizier's death. The only important Isma'ili stronghold to fall was Shahdiz, which threatened the capital Isfahan. Moreover, Sultan Berk-Yaruk may have used Isma'ili soldiery in his struggle with Muhammad Tapar as well as Sancar.

In sum, after Sultan Alp-Arslan's reign, under Sultan Malik-Shah the Great Seljuk Empire appears to have regained its distinctive Turkic cast despite Nizam al-Mulk, one that Sultan Tapar and Great Sultan Sancar reinforced. Arguably, therefore, the interregnum was caused by Sultan Malik-Shah's struggle to legitimize Great Seljuk sovereignty in terms consistent with Turkic ideology and to rule through a martial meritocracy rather than a civil administration staffed by Iranian notables. Although Sultan Malik-Shah failed in the former, his successors can be said to have succeeded in the latter.

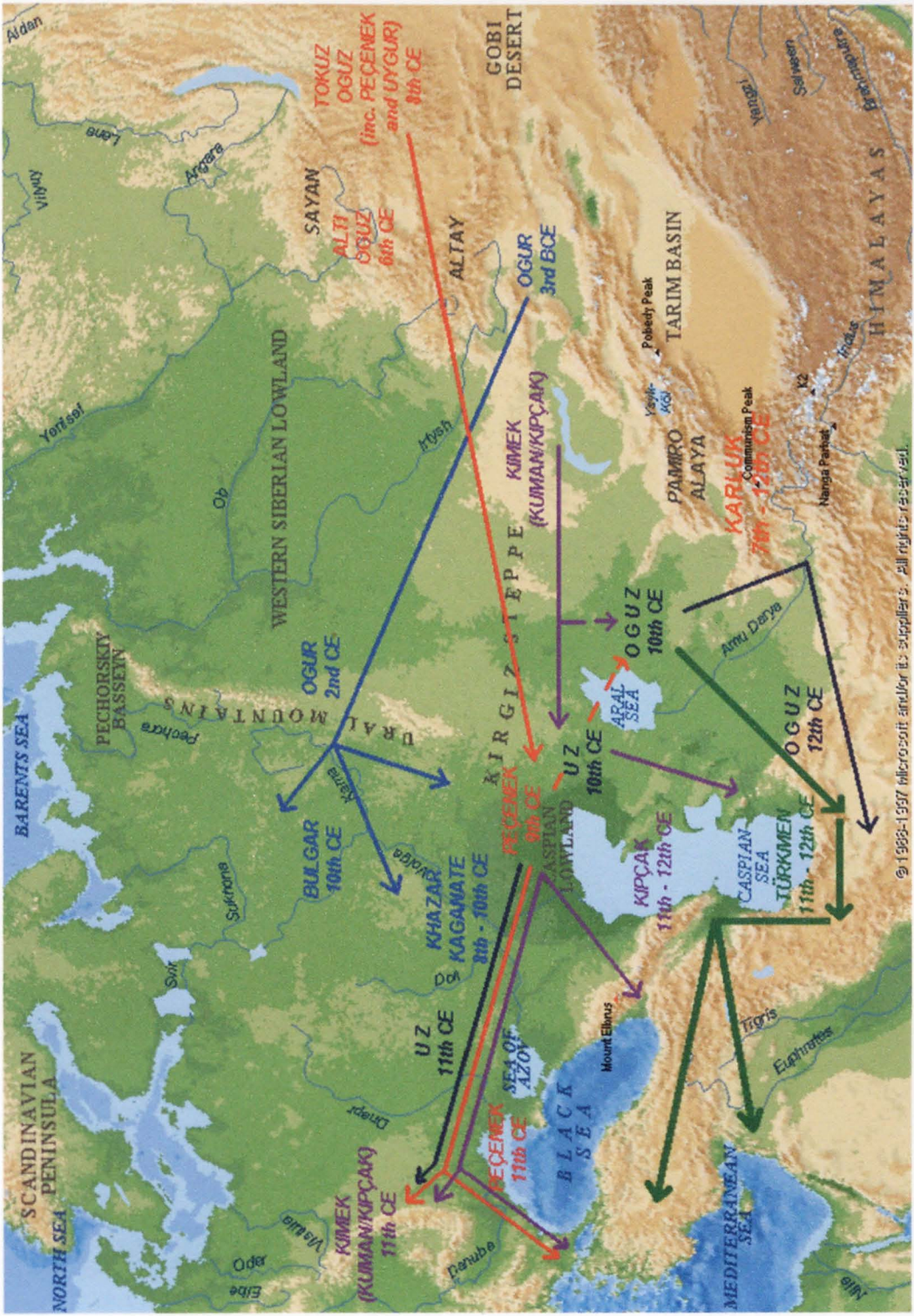
Consequently, the conclusion of this thesis is that the history of the Great Seljuks requires to be re-examined not only in the West but also in Turkey with regard to its ideology and cultural expectations.

## **APPENDIX 1: MAPS**

The maps in this section are in keeping with Turkish historiography. The first map attempts to show Turkic migrations according to Sümer and Kafesoğlu. The second concerns the probable borders of the Great Seljuk Empire at its height during the reign of Sultan Malik-Shah (1072-92). The third map aims to facilitate reference to place names used in the text. The remaining maps try to chart the raids and campaigns that led to the conquest of Anatolia.



# A1.1 Turkic Migrations and the Seljuks



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# *A1.2 The Great Seljuk Empire and its Regions*



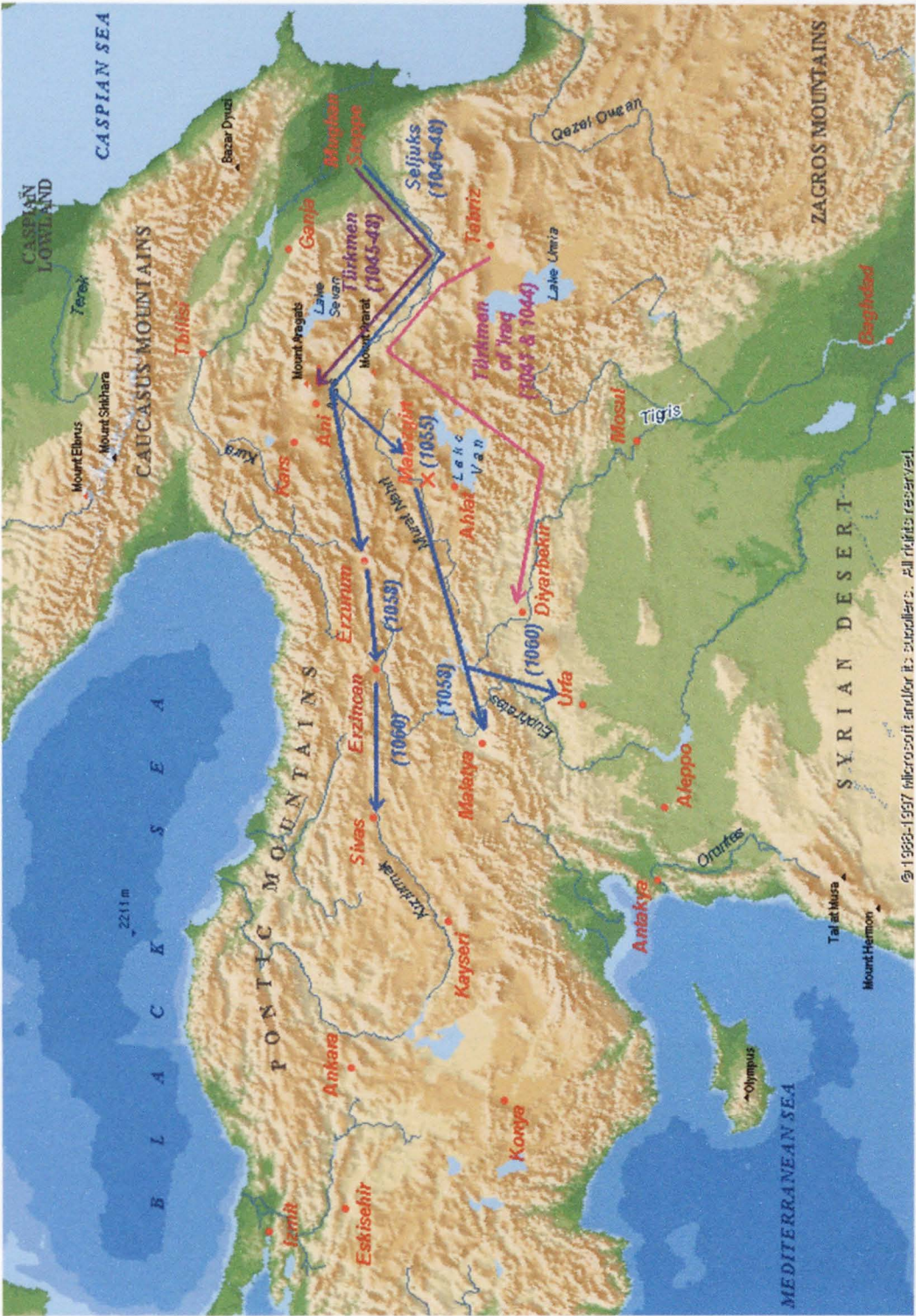


### A1.3 Urban Centres in Seljuk History



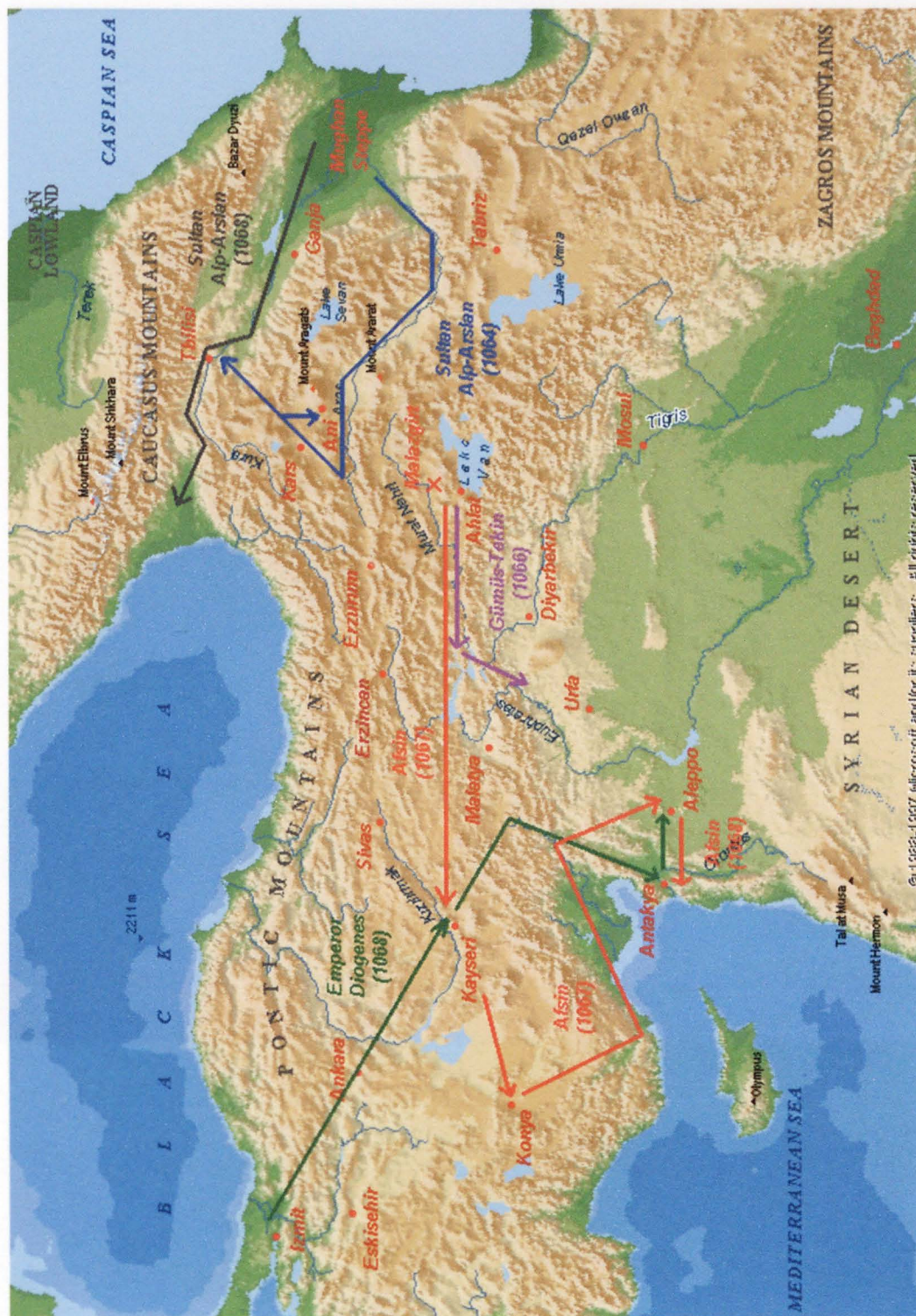


A1.4 Anatolia: Türkmen Raids under Sultan Tuğrul





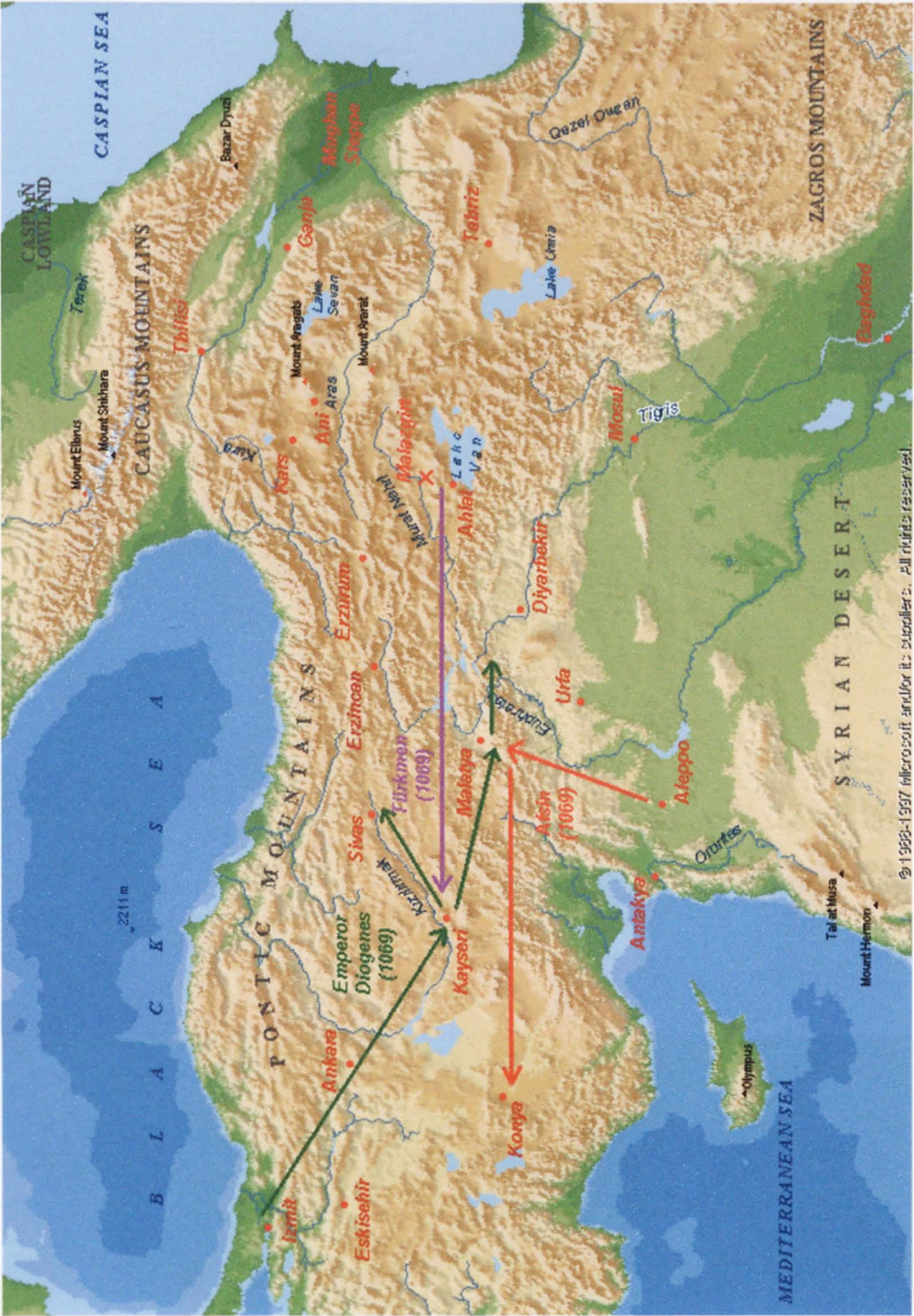
### A1.5 Sultan Alp-Arslan, Afşin and Emperor Diogenes



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# A1.6 Emperor Diogenes' 2<sup>nd</sup> Campaign



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# A1.7 Anatolia: Manuel and Er-Basgan



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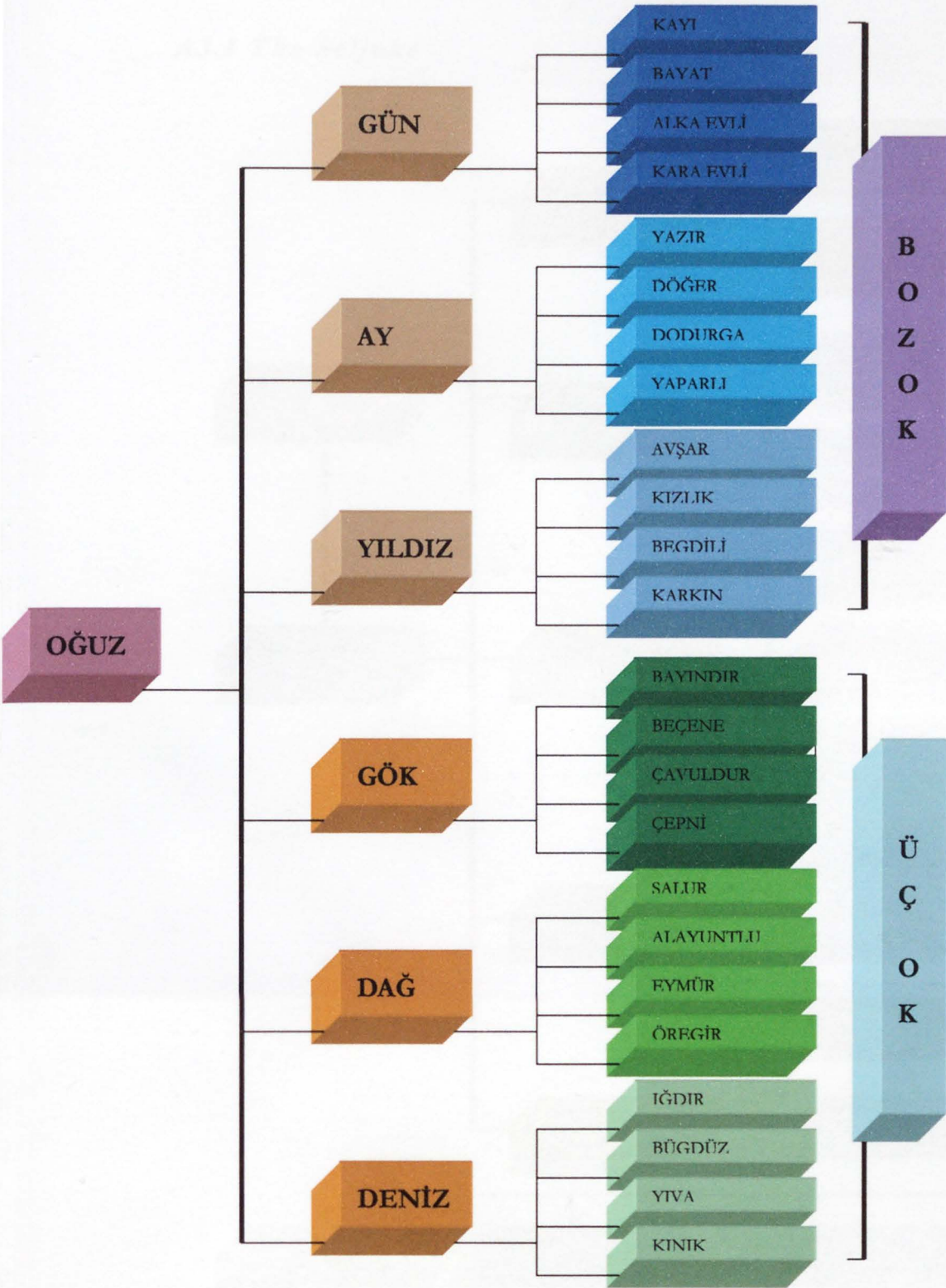


## A1.8 Emperor Diogenes' Final Campaign





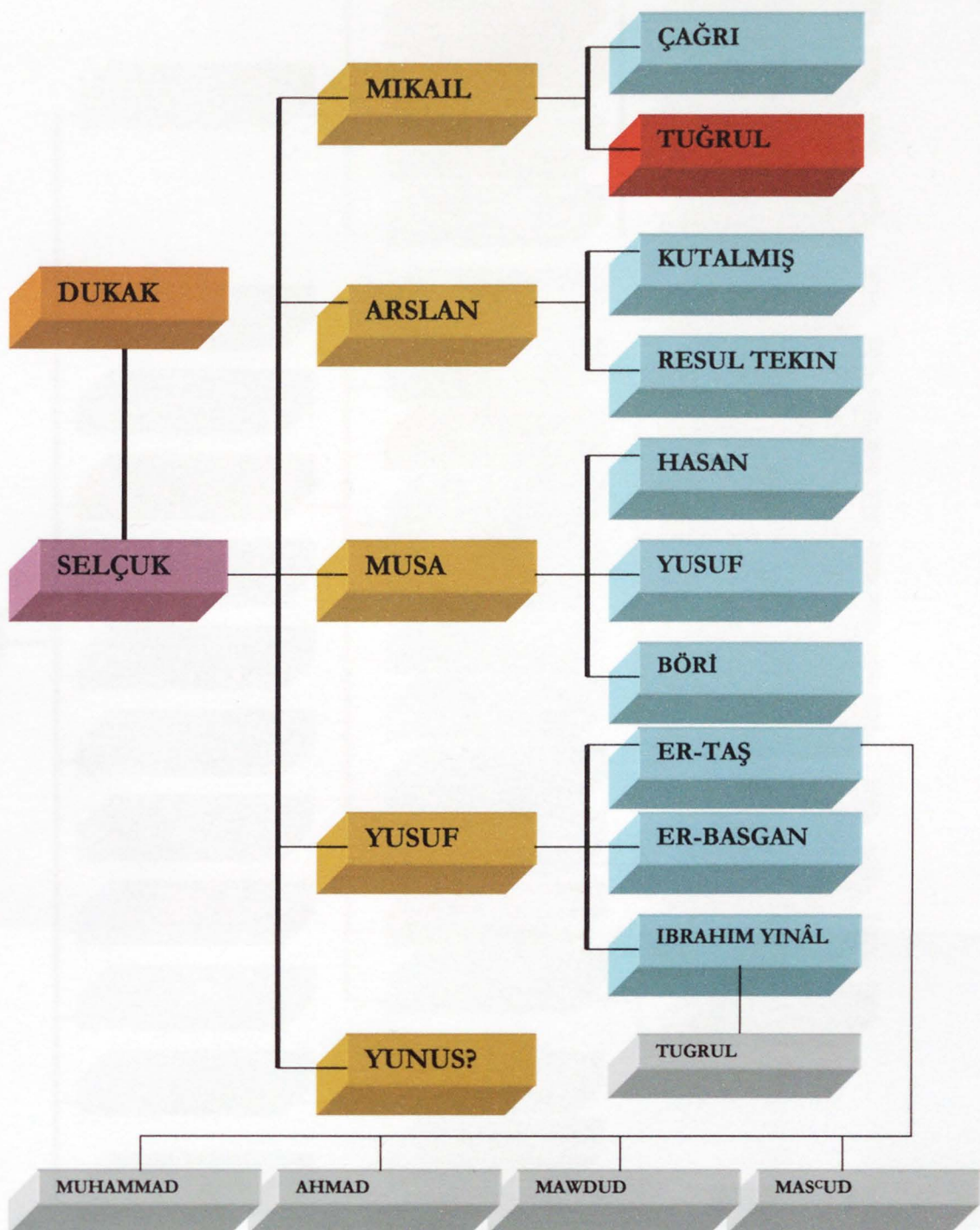
## APPENDIX 2: THE OGUZ



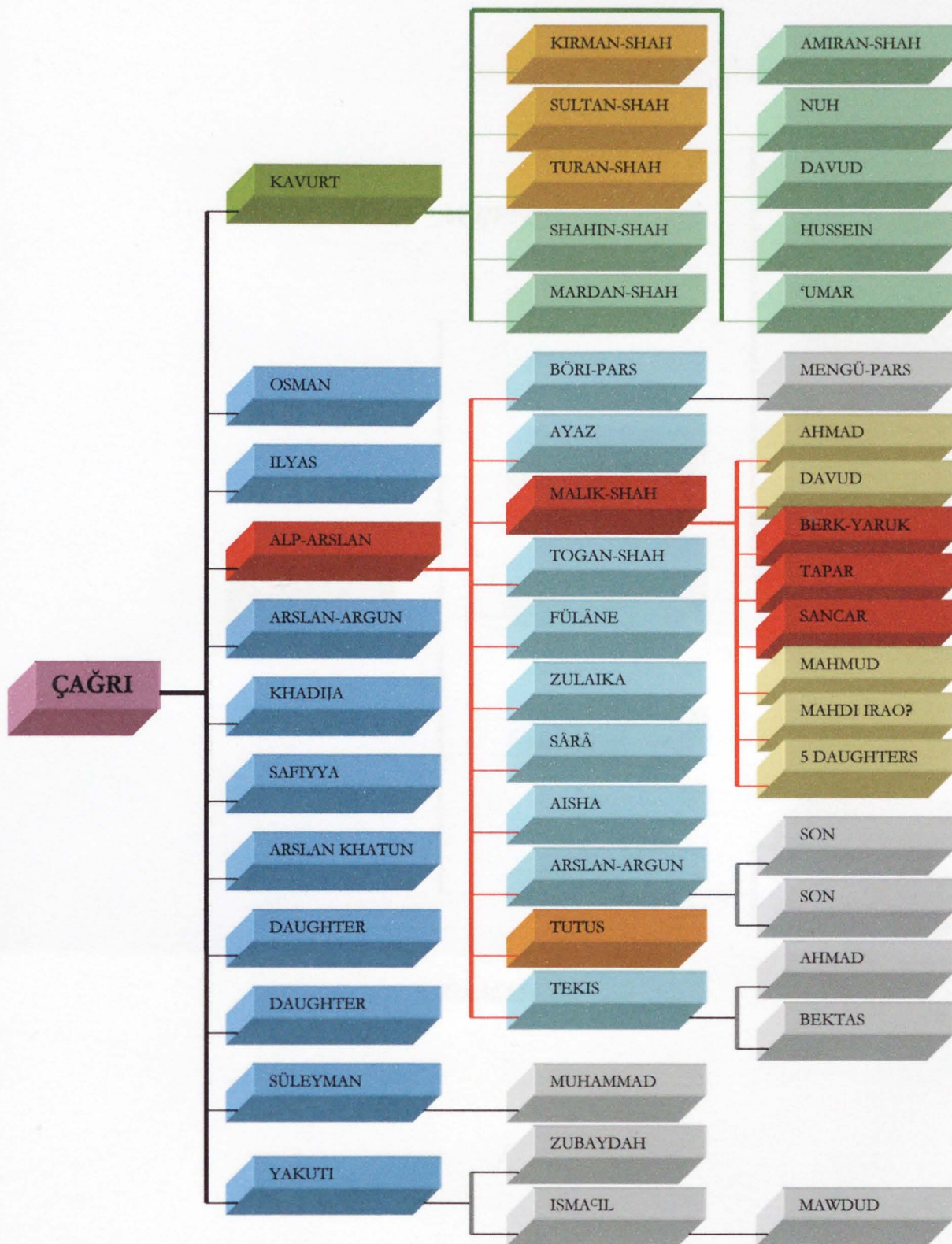


## APPENDIX 3: SELJUK GENEALOGY

### *A3.1 The Seljuks*

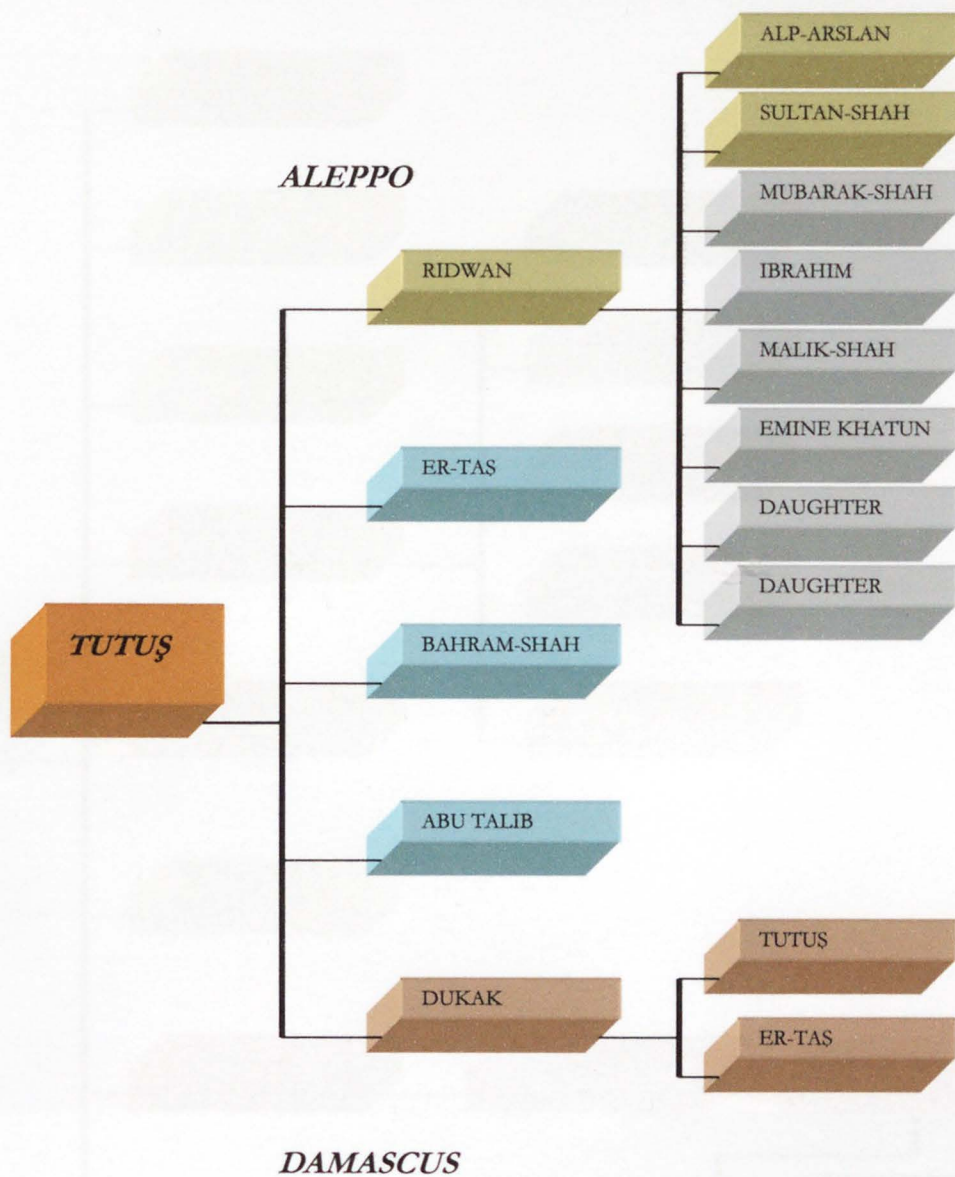


### A3.2 The Great Seljuks

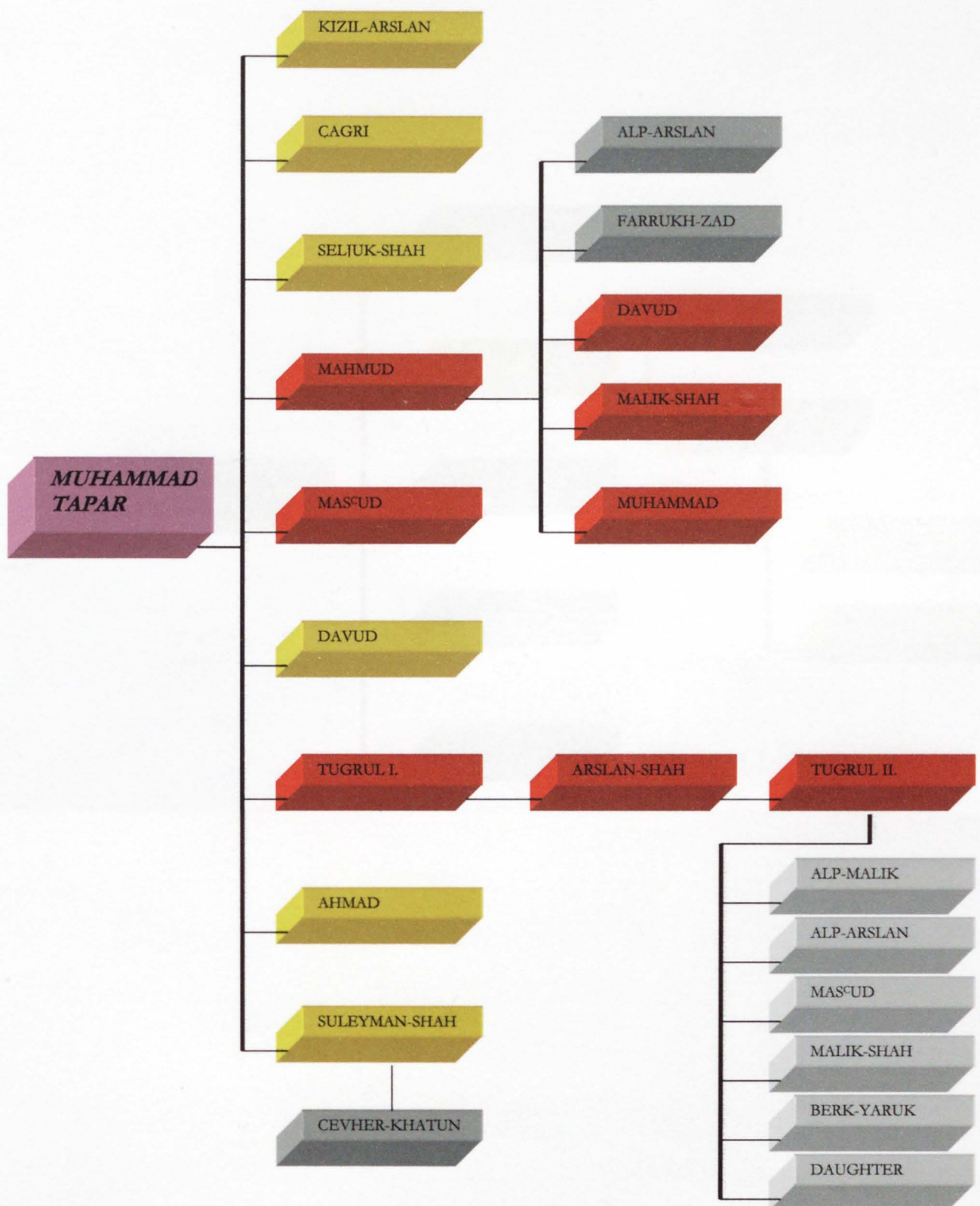




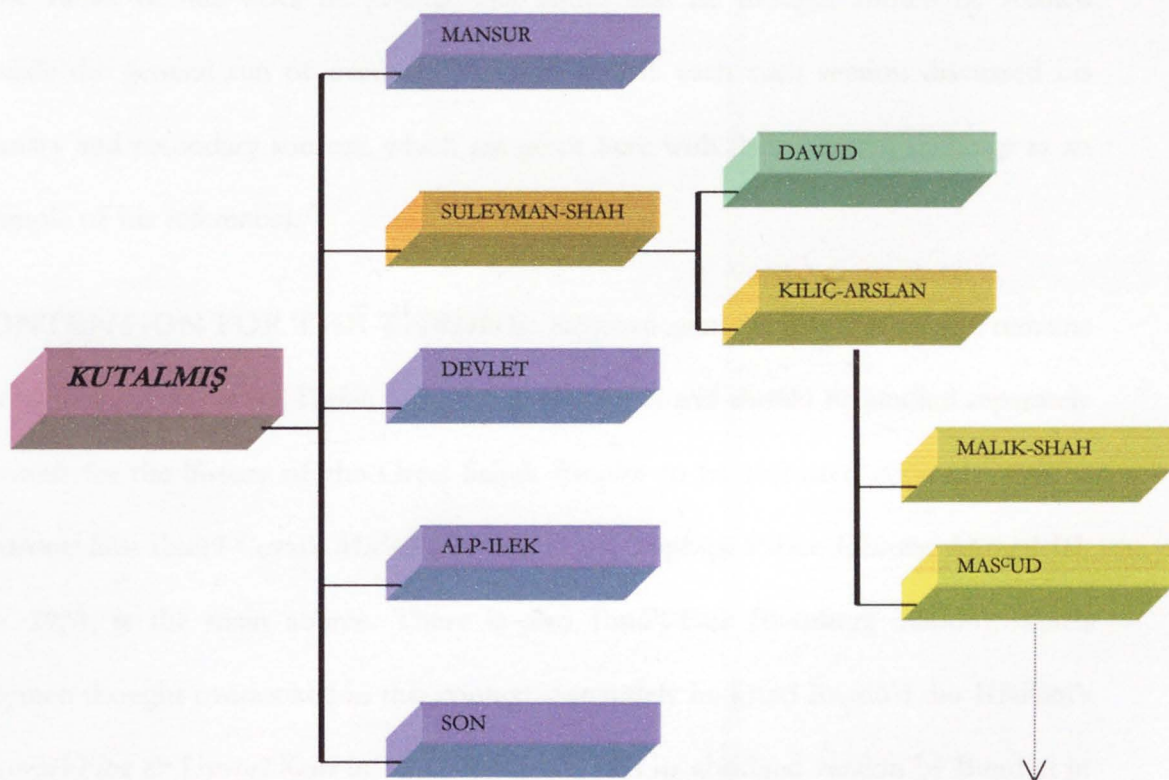
### A3.3 The Seljuks of Syria and Palestine



### A3.4 The Seljuks of Iraq



### A3.5 The Seljuks of Anatolia



## APPENDIX 4: M. A. KÖYMEN'S

### SOURCES

Köymen reviewed the history of the Great Seljuks in a brief work entitled *Selçuklu Devri Türk Tarihi*. In this work he pointed out issues that he thought should be studied outside the general run of events and at the end of each such section discussed his primary and secondary sources, which are given here with their Turkish spellings as an example of his references.

**CONTENTION FOR THE THRONE:** Köymen remarks that the subject remains key to understanding the Turkic concept of dominion and should be studied separately in order for the history of the Great Seljuk Empire to be evaluated correctly. **Arabic sources:** Sibṭ Ibnü'l-Cevzi's *Mir'atü'z-Zaman* in the Topkapı Palace Library, Ahmed III, No. 2931, is the main source. There is also Ibnü'l-Esir (Tornberg edition), which Köymen thought overlooked in this context. Separately he listed İmādü'd-din İsfahani's *Nusretü'l-Fitire & Usretü'l-Katre* in Paris, No. 2145, and its abridged version by Bundari in *Zübdetü'n-Nusre* (Houtsma edition); Beybars Mensuri's *Zübdetü'l-Fikre fî Tarihi'l-Hicre*, Feyzullah Library, No. 1459, which he thought quite accurate if brief; Ibnü'l-Cevzi's *el-Muntaẓam*, Haydarabad, No. 1359, which he thought should also be valued highly as a source even if it is not as good as his grandson's work. Finally he mentioned the less important Aynî's *İkdü'l-Cuman fî Tarihi Ehli'z-Zaman* of which there appear to be quite a few copies available in Istanbul, such as the Veliüddinefendi Library, No. 2390 or 2392.



**Persian sources:** Köymen noted that these are also of some value. Accordingly, there are Ravendi's *Rahatü's-Sudur* (M. Ikbal edition, GMS NS II London 1921), *Sadrü'd-din Nishaburi*, *Abhariü'd-Devleti's-Selçukiyye* (M. Siddiki edition, Lahore 1933), *el-Hüseyni* and *el-Uraza fi'l-Hikayeti's- Selçukiyye*.

**ORIGINAL PROBLEMS:** Köymen identified three, namely those relating to the Türkmen, the caliphate and the *bâtinis*. **Türkmen:** In addition to sources listed above, he points to Nizam al-Mulk's *Siyasat-Nama* (Seyyid Abbür-rahim Halhali edition, Teheran 1310 – Köymen remarked that apart from Ch. Schefer's French translation, the English, German and Turkish translations are without value). Also, he noted his critique of Kafesoğlu's *Sultan Melikşah Devrinde Büyük Selçuklu İmparatorluğu* in *Belleten* XVIII, 1953, pp. 557-604, which was taken into account by Kafesoğlu in his related article in the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. **Caliphate:** In addition to sources listed above, he listed the anonymous *Kitabü'l-Enba fi Taribi'l-Hülefa*, in Fatih Library, No. 4229, which he thought was not only an original but also comprehensive primary source. **Bâtinis:** While he noted that all the sources noted above mention the *bâtinis*, in addition he singled out Cüveyni's *Tarih-i Cihanküşa* (M. Kazvini edition), Reshidü'd-din's *Camii't-Tevarih* (Topkapi Palace, Treasury Library, No. 1653) and Abdu'l-Celil er-Razi's *Kitabu'n-Nakz* (Seyyid Celalü'd-din Hüseyini Urmevi edition, Tehran 1331).

**FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES:** **East:** Of those mentioned above he singled out Bündari, Nishaburi, Reshidü'd-din and Ravendi. **West:** As concerns the Fatimids, of those mentioned above he listed Sibte Ibnü'l-Cevzi, Ibnü'l-Cevzi and Ibnü'l-Esir as his main sources, which he supported with Ibnü'l Adim's *Bugyetü't-Taleb*, Topkapi Palace Library, Ahmed III, No. 2925, Ibnü'l-Kalanasi's *Tarih* (Amedroz edition, Beirut 1908), Ibnü'l-Adim's *Tarih Haleb* (S. Dahan's edition, Damas 1951, 1954), Ibnü'l-Ezrak el-

Fariki's *Tarihü'l-Fariki* (B. A. Avraz edition, Cairo 1959), *Siretü'l-Müeyyed fi'd-din* (M. K. Huseyn edition, Cairo 1949) and Ibn Muyesser's *Ahbar Misir* (M.. H. Massé edition, Cairo 1919). **Anatolia:** Köymen's Byzantine sources were J. Skyletzes and M. Attaliates, his Armenian sources were Aridaghés of Lasdived and Matthieu of Edessa, and his Syriac sources were Michael of Syria and occasionally Bar Hebraeus. The main *Arabic* sources were Sibt Ibnü'l-Cevzi and Imadü'd-din Isfahani. Finally, in addition to Ravendi and Reshidü'd-din, the main *Persian* sources were Kazvini's *Tarih-i Güzide* (London 1911) and Mirhand's *Ravzatü's-Safa* (Bombay 1270). **Crusades:** For these he referred to secondary European sources.



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<i>İÜEF</i>	İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi
<i>MEB</i>	Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı
<i>TDAV</i>	Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı
<i>TDK</i>	Türk Dil Kurumu
<i>TTK</i>	Türk Tarih Kurumu
<i>TVYY</i>	Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları

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